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IN THE HEADLINES

Ann Harding

DECEMBER 10, 1929 No. 836

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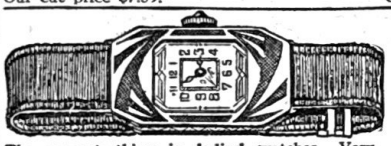

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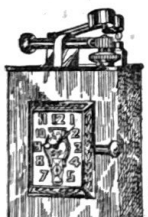

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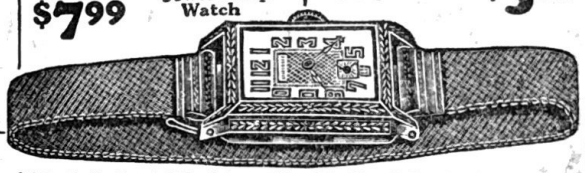

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VOL. XXXV. No. 836 DECEMBER 10, 1929

Moving Picture Stories

ETHEL ROSEMON, Editor ISSUED EVERY OTHER TUESDAY

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Flight

By

Irwin R. Franklin

THE tall, robust figure of a decidedly nervous young man paced up and down the spic and span waxed floor of the waiting room of the Marine Base Hospital at San Diego.

At the extreme left of this solemn, whitewashed room, directly in front of the door leading to the private sanctum of the Senior Medical Officer, a demure, dark-haired, soft-eyed army nurse, attired in the spotless white of her profession, sat before a desk, busily working at a large file of examination charts.

As if unable to withstand the mental strain any longer, the man turned and, with questioning eyes and a face bearing a look of nervous anguish, leaned over the little information desk, startling the nurse by the suddenness of his question:

"Do you think I'll pass the flying examination?"

"Nothing will flunk you but your actions. You seem a trifle over-anxious," she returned, immediately going back to her charts.

Another five minutes went by with the boy's patience going beyond the bounds of all human endurance. Then a buzzer sounded and the nurse disappeared through the mahogany door. Returning a moment later, she announced:

"You've passed. The Major is waiting inside for you!"

Lefty tried to smile, but something within him

MOVING PICTURE STORIES, Vol. XXXV., No. 836, December 10, 1929. Published bi-weekly by M. Clifford Pardee. Office of publication 819 Cedar St., Springfield, Ohio. Editorial office 149 West 44th St., New York, N. Y. Business office 25 West 43rd St., Suite 1114, New York, N. Y. Entered as Second-Class Matter, January 31, 1913, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry pending at Springfield, Ohio. Copyright 1929 by M. Clifford Pardee. Single copies 10 cents; yearly subscription $2.50, Canada $3.00, foreign $3.50.

seemed to choke back all signs of emotion, so he simply nodded his head in thanks and passed through the door to the inner sanctum of the Senior Medical Officer.

THE burr of hundreds of aeroplanes both overhead and on the ground deafened the ears of Lefty Phelps as he made his way across the Marine Base flying field.

Just ahead of him, standing with a group of men before a pursuit plane, the new recruit spied the tall, gaunt figure of a Marine aviation sergeant.

"That's the guy I'm to report to, I guess," Phelps thought aloud. "Pretty tough-looking baby, but I suppose all of those Marine sergeants are that way."

Panama Williams had traveled his merry, cursing way through four full enlistments in the Marines. He had seen service in every part of the civilized globe. The heat of the tropics had no more effect upon his weather-beaten, ruddy features than the biting cold of a Vladivostok winter.

This rip-roaring, hell-creating, devil-may-care flying sergeant was everything one would imagine a fighting man and, above all, a Marine, to be.

With the eyes of an animal waiting to leap upon its prey, the flip, profane tongue of a man who had tasted of the dregs of life's bitter cup, the body of a Titan and the heart of a lion, Williams, withal, was the tenderest, most sympathetic human in the service at moments when a fellow soldier really needed a friend.

As Lefty reached the pursuit plane, he stood at attention, a short distance from the group of men attired in the flying togs of the service.

"Wane me, Rook?" Williams snapped curtly, glancing up at the tall, clumsy, nervous form of the new recruit.

"I was told to report to you, sir," Lefty explained.

Panama's lips curled cynically, displaying a row of tobacco-stained teeth.

"So you want to be a flier, eh? You want to be a birdie and go bye-bye in the clouds? Well, it will be a miracle if you ever leave the ground." The sergeant's eyes turned and rested on the pursuit plane behind him. "Do you see that? That's an aeroplane. Costs Uncle Sam about fifty thousand smackers per copy. It'll be a long time before we get foolish enough to let you sit in that cockpit and wreck the works!"

After several weeks of intensive training, what was once Lefty Phelps, senior at Yale, now answered to the name of Private Phelps.

Meanwhile sincere and sympathetic understanding had arisen between Eleanor, the dark-eyed nurse attendant at the Senior Medical Officer's quarters, and the new recruit, and, on evenings when they both could get away, they were often in each other's company.

And, as the days passed, Panama's curtness instilled a feeling of respect and secret admiration in Phelp's heart for the hard-boiled sergeant. Never for one moment did he realize that the girl whom he hoped to teach to care for him was the one human being in all the world whom Sergeant Williams secretly worshiped and adored.

AMONG the new line-up of recruits that had entered the air service at the time of Lefty's acceptance, was one, Steve Graham, a product of the San Francisco pool parlors, whose insolence and cheap vanity had already incurred the disapproval of both the enlisted men and the officers stationed at the Marine Base.

On this particular day, Lefty and Steve were assigned to recondition the motor of a Martin bomber. For a time they worked silently, then Lefty dropped a wrench and, as he stooped over to pick it up, his wallet fell from the pocket of his blouse. Unaware of his loss, he resumed his work on the motor as Steve stealthily reached over and picked up the wallet from the ground.

The first thing to catch his eye was a newspaper clipping with the heading: "Phelps Reminds Us of Lindbergh—He's So Different."

Steve, like all followers of sports, instantly recognized the caption.

IT WAS true that Lefty Phelps had been a member of the Yale football team. In a big game between Harvard and the New Haven college, with the score 0-0, Lefty had been placed in the line-up for the first time as a substitute for an injured player. In the midst of a huddle, the ball had been passed to him, and he had made a sweeping left-end run just as he was tackled. He had escaped from his pursuer, but the roll over on the ground had confused him and, in his eagerness to continue, he had run in the direction of the wrong goal with a clear field ahead of him, thus giving Harvard a score of two, with nothing for Yale.

Accused by many of purposely betraying his college and ridiculed by the newspapers throughout the country, Phelps had been forced to leave college and seek a new life in California.

Wherever he traveled, the stigma of that ill-fated game had seemed to follow him until at last he believed he would receive a new chance and the cover of oblivion in the Marine Flying Corps. Now, after these many weeks of peace, his secret shame again arose to confront him more bitterly.

STEVE read the clipping over again. He looked at the diligent Lefty and then in the direction of a group of Marines working on some planes nearby.

"Hey, fellows," he called out derisively, "we've got a celebrity with us!"

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This is an adaptation of Columbia Pictures' screen presentation based on the story by Ralph Graves and produced by Harry Cohn with the cooperation of the United States Marine Corps to whom it is dedicated. Frank R. Capra directed with Jack Holt appearing as Panama Williams, Lila Lee as Eleanor, Ralph Graves as Lefty Phelps, Alan Roscoe as the Major, Harold Goodwin as Steve Roberts and Jimmy De La Cruze as Sandino.

"I've done it again. I'm all washed up now for sure."

"Who is he?" one of the non-commissioned officers asked as Lefty turned about, discovering his wallet and the tell-tale clipping in Steve's hand.

"Who?" heckled the former poolroom shark. "Why, Lefty Phelps, the guy that ran back—"

Before Steve could finish his disclosure, Lefty made a lunge at him. Wild-eyed, fearing his newfound happiness was again to be wrecked through the merciless derision of this man, Lefty did not care how far he might go to stifle Steve's disclosure.

"Give me that paper, it's mine!" he shrieked.

In a moment the two were rolling over the ground with a crowd of men grouped about them, watching the sudden and unexplained outburst.

At this juncture Sergeant Williams came upon the scene. He didn't stop to find out who was in the right or wrong. All that he knew was that two recruits were engaged in an open brawl, a strict breach of army discipline.

In a moment he was in the midst of the fray and his large hands gripped the necks of both combatants, dragging them from the center of the impromptu ring.

"Who started this shindig?" he demanded.

"He attacked me, Sergeant!" Steve complained. "The men here can prove it!"

Panama ignored his informant and eyed Lefty cynically.

"Just because you're a Marine, don't think you're Gene Tunney. A couple of days in the brig may change your attitude."

"I did attack him, sir," Lefty explained after the others had gone back to their work. "I attacked him because he tried to show the men something that would have made me the laughing stock of the Base."

"What was it?" Panama asked.

Lefty nervously tried to hide the clipping he still held in his hand, but his actions weren't quick enough to deceive Panama, who reached forth and took the newspaper article from him. He looked at the headline, then, with an expression of bewilderment, gazed at Lefty.

"I thought I knew you! Well, I'll be— You're the guy— Why, I was at that game. What are you doing in the Marine Corps?"

The boy shifted nervously from one foot to the other. Panama handed him back the clipping and he hurriedly hid it from view.

"I couldn't stand the ridicule of the world. The Marines seemed a place where I might get a chance to prove that I am neither a dub nor a betrayer."

Panama smiled. He knew how deeply Lefty had been affected by his error that lost a great game for Yale. Above all, he knew Lefty's type.

"Gimme that clipping, kid!" he said.

The boy's face turned crimson. Was this man whom he believed in like all the rest? Did he want the clipping to show to everyone at the Base?

With a feeling of mistrust, he reached into his pocket and brought forth the newspaper article that had changed the course of his entire life.

Panama, much to the younger man's discomfort, read the headline aloud:

"Lefty Phelps Reminds Us of Lindbergh—He's So Different!" For a moment the two looked at each other, then that welcome but seldom seen smile returned to the hard-boiled sergeant's face as he tore off part of the clipping and handed it back to Lefty. "That's what they'll be printing about you soon, 'Lefty Phelps Reminds Us of Lindbergh.' You've got the stuff to do it!"

Lefty's whole being snapped into tune with this man's words of encouragement.

"Gee, that's decent of you; I don't know how to thank—"

Panama frowned upon the lad as he bit off a large piece of plug tobacco.

"Say, what the hell are you doing here? Get back to that plane and tighten those gears!"

TEN hours of intensive flying instruction pass quickly for a Marine waiting for the opportunity to make his first solo flight, and so Lefty, Steve and the other recruits, successfully past their instruction stage, waited for the big moment.

On this particular day the anxious embryonic fliers were fortunate in having "flying weather", and the field at San Diego was buzzing with activity, both overhead and on the ground.

"Climb eight hundred feet, circle the field and make a three-point landing," Panama was instructing Steve as he stepped into the cockpit. "And, remember, that stick isn't a pool cue. Now give her the gun!"

At the command, Steve was away to a clumsy take-off that created much adverse comment among the official onlookers.

"You see? He forgets everything I tell him. He tries to take it off before he gets a flying speed," Panama explained to Lefty who was standing beside him. "When he comes down, you take your hop and don't make the same mistake!"

At that moment Lefty heard some one calling his name and turned to see an orderly from the Senior Medical Officer's quarters approaching.

"I'm Phelps. What do you want?"

The orderly handed him a note and departed. The boy turned his back to Panama and excitedly tore open the envelope, his heart beat increasing by leaps and bounds as he read the contents:

"Am rooting for you strong. Good luck. Eleanor."

Lefty folded the small piece of paper and carefully hid it from view in the pocket of his leather windjammer just as Steve made a three-point landing in veteran style.

Panama and Lefty crossed the field to join the successful Marine.

"That was a peach of a landing," Lefty said, holding out his hand which the other man ignored.

"I'm afraid you're right, Phelps,'" Steve replied blandly, removing his parachute and handing it to Lefty. "You'll probably need this 'chute, but, when you jump, don't forget to pull the ring!"

Quick to sense another clash between these two, Panama stepped between them and addressed Lefty:

"Remember, kid, eight hundred feet up, circle the field and make a three-point landing."

As Phelps climbed up into the waiting plane, about to don his Gasborne helmet, Steve cupped his hands to his mouth and chided:

"If you fly backwards, Phelps, it doesn't count, and, remember, you're not playing Harvard!"

The unfairness of Steve's sarcasm at the moment when he was about to manage a ship alone for the first time completely upset the boy, robbing him of the power to control his over-anxiety.

"Never mind that corner lizard," cheered Panama. "Give her the gun and show 'em!"

With the Gasborne helmet strapped to his head now, Lefty was prevented from hearing the heartening words of Panama, though his eyes caught the sneer plainly visible upon Steve's face.

Anxious to prove that he would never again make the mistake that lost the big game for Yale and completely upset because of Steve's derisive heckling, Lefty impulsively shoved the throttle and the plane eased forward.

The boy's face was frozen and he tried in vain to concentrate upon the mechanical contrivance. Taking his grip from the throttle, both his hands froze on the "stick" as the plane rapidly gathered momentum.

The blurred faces of the privates and officers standing on the sidelines only tended to excite and unnerve the boy all the more.

Back at the starting place, Panama felt a cold chill run up and down his spine and found it difficult to speak when Eleanor came running toward him, breathlessly demanding to know what had happened.

"His over-anxiety completely unnerved him," the sergeant explained. "He's frozen to the controls and can't leave the ground. There is a concrete wall just ahead, God help him!"

In a moment, Panama was off in the side car of a motorcycle driven at top speed by an orderly from the Post Commandant's quarters.

In the speeding plane, Lefty could not get himself to move the joy stick which acted as lead in his hands. He knew that he hadn't left the ground and that he was headed straight for disaster, but rather that than face the jeers of the soldiers back there because he had failed again.

Just ahead of him was a concrete wall that seemed to grow larger and larger with the passing of each second. Another moment and the semblance of all reason passed from Lefty's brain. The plane crashed into the wall, with its tail flying into the air, and stood on its nose as the entire ship burst into flames.

At that moment the motorcycle carrying Sergeant Williams pulled up beside the wreck. Panama dashed from the side car, unmindful of his own safety, and ran to the burning plane, smashing in the side of the fusilage, braving the gas fumes and treacherous flames to rescue the boy locked in the death furnace.

In a moment he was dragging the unconscious Lefty through the hole he had made in the side of the fusilage out into the fresh air and the safety of the large field.

By that time the ambulance and a crowd of Marines, officers and civilians crowded up near the burning plane.

Heartening cheers of "Bravo!" rang up from the crowd as Panama, with his hands badly burned, carried Lefty to the ambulance.

It took more than two hours to revive the boy. When he finally awoke, his eyes met those of Eleanor.

"I've done it again!" he cried. "I'm all washed up now for sure!"

In an effort to hearten him, the girl spoke encouragingly:

"You'll get another chance. It'll be all right."

"Oh, why didn't they let me rot in that burning plane?" Lefty moaned. "I knew what I wanted to do, but I couldn't do it; the stick froze in my hands!"

TWO months had passed since Lefty smashed up in his first solo flight. A month in the hospital had put him back into service as good as new, but the chance to fly again didn't come. Directly after his release from the hospital, the Major in command had prepared orders to assign Lefty to a ship, dropping him from the Air Forces of the Marines, when something happened.

Thousands of miles away, in a little Republic known as Nicaragua, a dissatisfied native leader, Sandino, disapproved of the manner in which the present administration was running things and started a revolution that threatened American lives and American business in the Central American Republic.

After the uncalled for shooting of two United States Marines, Uncle Sam decided to end the ambitions of Senor Sandino and his army of rebel followers.

The troops at the San Diego Base were the first to go south, and Panama, to save Lefty, had him assigned as his mechanic, so, two months after Lefty landed in the hospital, he was receiving his first taste of actual warfare, commuted to the Marine Base at Ocotal, Nicaragua.

A month went by and the casualties in the Marine and Nicaraguan government troop ranks increased so rapidly that additional army nurses, including Eleanor, were sent down from the States. What was believed to be a "before breakfast lark" was developing into a real war, with Sandino continually avoiding his American pursuers.

During a spell when the rebel chief retreated to the mountains, hiding in the safety of a natural stronghold to await ammunition and food supplies, the Marines were left upon their own resources in the peaceful quiet of Ocotal.

It was then that Panama spent most of his time with Eleanor, pressing his suit in his own simple

Panama spent most of his time with Eleanor, yet never actually summoned up enough courage to ask her to marry him.

way, yet never actually summoning up enough courage to ask her to marry him.

Lefty and the sergeant were bunked together in an old shack on the outskirts of the town, near the hospital base.

Though the boy adored Eleanor, secretly loved her with all the devotion any man might possess for a woman, he was forced to stifle his desires and keep his words of adoration silent, for he knew that Panama worshiped the little nurse and he would have far rather thrown himself bodily into an open barrage of the enemy's fire than disillusion Panama.

Afraid of himself, he avoided her so that she might be with Panama every moment of her spare time. This was harder on the boy than the knowledge that his course might lead her to the altar with his friend, forever removing her from his life. He "went native", took to drink and tried to forget in the embraces of the unchastened Nicaragua girls' arms, which, in itself, was in strict opposition to the severe rules of conduct laid down for the Marines.

On more than one occasion, Panama rescued Lefty from a native bar, dragging him back to their quarters, unconscious from liquor, and saving him from disgrace and a long stretch in the brig.

ON a bright morning, following one of Lefty's wild orgies, Panama came bursting into the little room that housed them.

"I've got the right idea at last!" he shouted. "You, with your education, drinking your life away when you might be of use to me!"

"What can I do for you?" the boy asked.

"It's about Eleanor. Last night I had the ring and was ready to pop the question but I couldn't put the words together. You know books, you've been to college, you know how to say it!"

Lefty looked up at his friend with a sickening emotion that brought beads of cold perspiration to his forehead.

"You want me to ask for you?"

Panama smiled broadly and nodded in assent.

"That's the idea!"

"You're crazy!"

A look of disappointment crossed the sergeant's face for a brief moment, then he smiled and walked over to the bunk where the boy sat, dropping down beside him.

"Aw, come on. You'll know what to say. You got to do it. The way you sling words around, why, it'll be a cinch!"

Lefty jumped up and crossed the room, trying for all the world to hide his true emotions.

"I—I—can't do it, Panama—I can't!"

For a moment neither of them spoke, then Panama lifted himself up slowly and walked to the door.

"Okay, kid, if you put it that way. I can't talk and I thought—well, it means my life's happiness!"

Lefty's eyes grew moist. He couldn't hurt this man to save his own selfish feelings.

"Panama, pal," he said, "if you put it that way, you know I'll do it!"

THAT night Lefty met Eleanor, and for a while they walked side by side in silence. Finally the boy said:

"Eleanor, there is something I've been wanting to tell you all evening—"

"Yes?" the nurse encouraged eagerly. "What is it?"

"I hardly know how to begin," he faltered. "I want to tell you that somebody loves you—that there is some one who thinks you are the most adorable girl in the world—"

"Lefty!" she cried, her eyes sparkling with happiness.

The boy, unheeding, staunch in his determination to keep his word to Panama and bury his own desires, went on:

"This man thinks constantly of you. His waking hours are yours, his dreams are filled with visions of your loveliness. Eleanor, I don't believe you could find a finer chap anywhere than Panama Williams!"

A sudden stillness fell between the two. Eleanor's eyes grew moist, her heart seemed to stop beating as the blood in her body ran cold with despair.

"Lefty, you mustn't, you mustn't!"

The boy thought his heart would break when he looked into the large, dark, pleading eyes gazing up at him, but he was determined to play the game fair.

"Can't you understand, dear? I'm asking you because he can't. He loves you, Eleanor, and he lives only in hopes of some day making you his—"

"Don't, don't say it!" she cried.

"But I must. He—he's waiting for me now, waiting to hear that you have accepted him. He'll make you the happiest girl in the world. Won't you—"

Eleanor pressed her hand over Lefty's mouth to stem the words she dreaded to hear. When he had stopped talking, she threw her arms about his neck. He felt her warm breath upon his moist cheek, her heaving breast and her soft body against his. He could resist her no longer. Come what may, here were a man and a woman in love. Nothing human on this earth could keep them apart.

He closed his eyes, held her close to him and pressed his lips against hers for the first time, murmuring:

"I love you, I love you, I love you, sweetheart!"

SEVERAL hours later, long after he had left Eleanor at the nurses' quarters, Lefty returned to the little shack where he and Panama lived. When he entered he found his friend waiting for him with eager eyes.

"What did she say?" Panama pleaded. "Is it okay?"

Lefty looked to the floor, his face crimson, and slowly shook his head.

(Continued on page 26)

"What were you and Doug doing in Evansville all day Tuesday and Tuesday night?"

FAST LIFE

By ETHEL ROSEMON

"PAT, are you engaged to Doug?" Paul Palmer's eyes held those of the lovely young girl sitting before him as he waited anxiously for her answer. Patricia Mason shook her head. "Will you swear to that on the Bible?" the boy demanded.

"Of course, I will," Pat replied.

Paul took her hand in his and his voice was filled with affectionate concern as he continued:

"Dear, I know you care for Doug, but don't let your love for him get you into trouble."

"Why, of course, I won't." Pat's tone betrayed surprised wonder that Paul would talk to her that way.

"Then what were you and Doug doing in Evansville all day Tuesday and Tuesday night?" the boy demanded.

Pat drew her hand from his and her young eyes were scornful as she accused:

"So your great love for me prompted you to act the gallant role of spy!"

"I didn't spy on you, darling. I discovered it quite by accident."

Pat knew that he was speaking the truth and there was no sign of anger in her voice as she told him:

"We were there, but I can't explain why. I can tell you truthfully, though, that nothing wrong happened." Then a new thought came to her. "You'll never tell anybody, will you, Paul?" she asked anxiously.

"Wild horses couldn't drag it from me," he assured her as he gave her hand an affectionate little pat.

"I'm awfully fond of you, Paul," she said as she rose to join the other members of Douglas Stratton's party who were out in the kitchen partaking of midnight refreshments, mostly liquid.

This is an adaptation of First National Pictures' screen presentation based on the play by Samuel Shipman and John B. Hymer. John F. Goodrich wrote the scenario and John Francis Dillon directed, with Loretta Young appearing as Patricia Mason, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., as Douglas Stratton, Chester Morris as Paul Palmer, William Holden as the Governor, Frank Sheridan as the Warden, Ray Hallor as Rodney Hall and John St. Polis as Mr. Hall.

"That's a lot of consolation," Paul returned, a note of bitterness creeping into his voice for the first time.

THE party was a merry one as all parties "thrown" by the younger set usually were. Doug's apartment was the favorite meeting place of this particular group, for the boy lived alone while all his friends had homes that were watched over by a more or less conventional pair of parents. The only drawback to the continuation of the festivities until dawn was the presence of a landlord who not only wanted to sleep himself after the midnight hour but wished to make sure that his other tenants would be undisturbed. First he phoned to Doug that all noise must cease and then he appeared in the doorway in person and Doug knew he meant business.

"You'll have to run along now, folks," he announced to his guests. "The party is all cleaned up." He turned to Pat. "I'll take you home," he offered.

"No, indeed, Doug," Pat refused. "I've been your guest all evening. You stay here and clean up."

"My car's down at the door, waiting for you," Rodney Hall told her with a possessive air.

Pat gave him an uneasy look. Rod had been slightly under the influence of liquor when he joined the party and he had imbibed more freely than the rest during the entire evening. Every time he could get her alone he had tried to make love to her and then he had done his best to pick a quarrel with his host, even going so far as to take Doug's pistol from the drawer and hold it in his unsteady hand, firing it into the air before the other boys of the party could get it away from him, and, when, upon going to the drawer of Doug's chiffonier for a towel, he had pulled out a dainty feminine undergarment, his tone, as he held it up for the others to view, had held a hidden note of ugliness. Doug had explained that the combination had been returned by mistake with his laundry, but the look with which Rod greeted the explanation had been openly, menacingly incredulous. Pat knew the boy really loved her. She knew, also, that he was not responsible for his actions when drinking and she had no desire to be alone with him in his car.

"Does your bus hold three?" she smiled, linking her arm into that of Paul who was standing beside her. "You see, I promised Paul earlier in the evening—"

"Well, three makes it quite crowded," Rod sulked.

"Oh, that won't make any difference," she told him cheerfully as she hurried out to get her coat.

When the others had gone, Pat ran back to the apartment on the pretense of having forgotten her purse but, in reality, to be quickly clasped in Doug's arms as he pressed a kiss on her upturned lips.

AN HOUR passed. The quiet that reigned in Douglas Stratton's apartment gave no hint of the noisy party that had danced to the jazz radio tunes a short time before. Doug's Murphy bed was pulled out from the wall, ready for the night. The shaded lamps spread a delicate, restful glow over the room and revealed Doug, dressing gown thrown over his pajamas, reclining on the divan—and holding in his arms the night-robed figure of Patricia Mason.

"They never suspected a thing," she was telling him gaily. "After they dropped me at the house, I waited until I was sure their car was out of sight, then I jumped in a taxi and came back here." She snuggled closer into his arms.

"Don't I get any credit for laying out your nightie and my pajamas so artistically?" he asked, referring to the preparations she had found on her return to the apartment.

"Oh, I don't know," she teased. "Look whom you were expecting." Then her manner grew serious and she questioned wistfully, "You do love me, don't you, darling?"

The boy pressed his lips to hers before he replied:

"So much that I'm never going to let you leave me as long as I live."

"Don't be silly," she laughed. "I've got to be home by three at the latest."

The boy plainly showed his disappointment.

"Couldn't you tell your mother you spent the night at Betty's?" he asked eagerly.

"Don't forget Mother was a girl herself once," she reminded him.

At that moment the ringing of the telephone brought them both to their feet with a start.

"Who could it be at this hour of the morning?" Pat queried, worried. And she was still more worried when she heard Doug say:

"Yes, Mrs. Mason, Pat is right here."

As she took the receiver from the boy's hand, she whispered:

"Turn on the radio so Mother will think the crowd is still here." Then into the phone she said, "Yes, dear, it's a lovely party. Oh, yes, they're all here, that is, most of them. Why, Mother, I alone with Doug?" Her voice was frankly shocked. "How could you have such awful thoughts? Oh, you're nervous being home alone? That's different. I'll get dressed right away—I mean I'll put on my hat and coat—and come right home."

But, in spite of her promise, Pat lingered a few moments longer in Doug's arms.

"I forgot to tell you Paul knows we were in Evansville all Tuesday night," she said. "I don't know how he found out but he implied that you hadn't done right by our Nell. I finally convinced him that everything had been perfectly straight." Her eyes grew dreamy, wistful. "I wonder how he'd feel if he knew we are secretly married. And as for Mother—"

"And my Dad, too," the boy put in. "Ministers think early marriages are all wet."

"You don't regret marrying so young, do you, dear?" the girl asked eagerly.

"I'm only waiting for the day when I can shout it to the world," he told her.

"After they dropped me at the house, I waited until they were out of sight, then jumped in a taxi and came back here."

"And you will love me for ever and ever?"

"'Till death do us part'," he returned solemnly.

Then Pat wanted a glass of water and Doug went into the kitchen to get it for her while she stretched out on the bed and snuggled down among the pillows. The next moment she was roused to a sitting position by a movement at the window, followed immediately by the entrance of Rodney Hall.

"I'm a pretty good detective," the intruder said quickly. "I had a hunch I'd find you here."

Pat sprang from the bed and confronted him.

"You get out of here—you're drunk!" she commanded.

"Not so drunk that I haven't got your number," he told her. Then he swung about quickly as Doug appeared in the doorway. "And you're the guy that called me down tonight because you thought I wasn't a gentleman," he sneered. "As for you, Pat, you're nothing but a common, cheap little—"

Before he could utter the ugly word, Doug's hand was over his mouth and his stern voice was commanding:

"Now you get out of here, before I throw you out!"

"Try and do it!" Rod dared him, picking up the coal tongs from before the open fire place.

Doug's hand flew back and grasped the gun from a drawer of his desk. With it he covered the boy who was about to bring the tongs down upon his head.

"Lay off the gun play," Rod warned. "There'll be scandal enough if this ever gets out."

There was only one way out of the situation and Pat took it.

"Now see here, Rod," she said sternly, "we may as well tell you—Doug and I are married."

The boy's drink-heavy eyes looked into hers for a moment as if trying to grasp the purport of her announcement, then he quickly grasped his side and with a groan of agony doubled up on the divan. Doug gave one look at him and, with a whispered, "There is a doctor down the hall, I'll get him," hurried from the room.

The moment the door had closed, Rod jumped up from the divan and, with one hand grasping the revolver Doug had dropped on the desk, with the other he clutched Pat's wrist.

"That marriage bunk doesn't fool me," he told her. "You're going to get dressed and go right home to your mother."

He drew the struggling girl toward the door and reached it just as Douglas re-entered the room. In spite of the gun held unsteadily in the hand of the drunken boy, Doug plunged at him and loosened his hold on Pat's wrist. Back and forth they struggled, finally reeling out into the dimly lighted hall. With eyes wide with terror, Pat heard blow after blow, the sound of bodies thrown against the wall, of angry words, now in Rod's thick voice, now in the sharp commanding tones of Doug. Then a shot rang

out and she did not dare turn her eyes to learn the identity of the limp figure that had crumpled to the floor in the doorway. The next minute Doug's arms were about her and he was murmuring comforting words in her ear as the sound of hurrying feet were approaching the apartment. Through a daze the terrible words came to her, "Call the police. This is a job for the coroner," then a merciful unconsciousness obliterated the terrible scene.

THE trial of Douglas Stratton for the murder of Rodney Hall attracted world-wide interest, for both boys belonged to socially prominent families and the best friend of the accused was Paul Palmer whose father had been recently elected Governor. The plight of the young bride, her desperate fight to clear her husband lent to the story a sentimental interest which was rich food for the sob-sisters. But no amount of influential connections, no number of brilliant lawyers could save Douglas Stratton from a conviction of murder in the first degree and the attendant sentence of electrocution. Frantically the boy's father, the young bride, the Governor's only son, Paul, pleaded for a commutation of the death penalty. Twice Governor Palmer granted a reprieve but no new evidence was forthcoming and at last the evening of the morning on which the boy's life was to be forfeited to the State came with all its heart-rending, hopeless horror.

The condemned boy's best friend stood at the other side of the bars, his hand clasped in that of his white-faced pal.

"Paul, after I go tonight, I want you to see that Pat's taken care of," Doug faltered. Paul gave his promise.

"I just left Dad," he added. "He said, if one spark of new evidence came up, he'd stay your execution. Don't give up. If something develops at tonight's hearing, it means you get a new trial."

His friend shook his head.

"I'm afraid it's hopeless," he murmured. "I told all I knew at the trial, swore that the gun must have exploded when it fell to the ground in the struggle, but it wasn't any use."

The two hands clasped tightly through the iron bars and Paul hurried away to the executive mansion to attend the hearing in the hope that he might be able to find some way to save his friend's life. When he entered the room, the proceedings were just about to start. He glanced at his father, sitting behind the massive desk, and he knew that the strain was telling on the Governor's health. It was the first execution since he had taken the chair and that it should be the best friend of his own boy was a tragedy that haunted every waking hour.

"Young Stratton has only a few hours to live," he reminded the sad little group assembled before him. "The briefer your arguments, the more time I can give to considering my final decision."

The first to take the floor was Reverend Andrew Stratton, the father of the condemned boy. The kindly, benevolent face that rose above the black cloth of his calling was lined with sorrow, yet there was no hint of bitterness in the sad eyes, about the gentle mouth that had almost forgotten how to smile during those drab months when his only child was fighting so desperately for the right to live.

"I ask no favor for the cloth I wear," Mr. Stratton began. "I'm just a father begging another father to have mercy. Please put yourself in my place and make your love as a father temper with mercy your duty as a Governor. Forget you're the Governor and try to imagine it is your son who is going to the chair." His voice broke. "Please give my boy a chance to live. He is so young to die."

Across the room another man sprang up.

"I, too, am a father," he said, "a father without a son. My boy was murdered, murdered in cold blood. Justice cannot fold its arms and reprieve wanton killers just because the murderers have fathers and wives."

Mr. Stratton turned to him, but there was no reproach in his glance.

"Your son is dead, sir," he said gently. "If they kill Douglas tonight, will that give your boy back to you?"

"I am not referring to the dead, sir," Mr. Hall told him, "but we must teach the younger generation that they are not a privileged class."

"If my boy's death would save the younger generation, I know he'd die gladly. But will it, sir, will it?"

The broken-hearted father sank into his chair and buried his face in his hands.

"Is there anyone else?" the Governor questioned.

A death-like silence prevailed as Paul crossed the room and whispered a few gentle words to the white-faced girl who was sitting numbly beside Mr. Stratton. She rose to her feet and approached the Governor's desk.

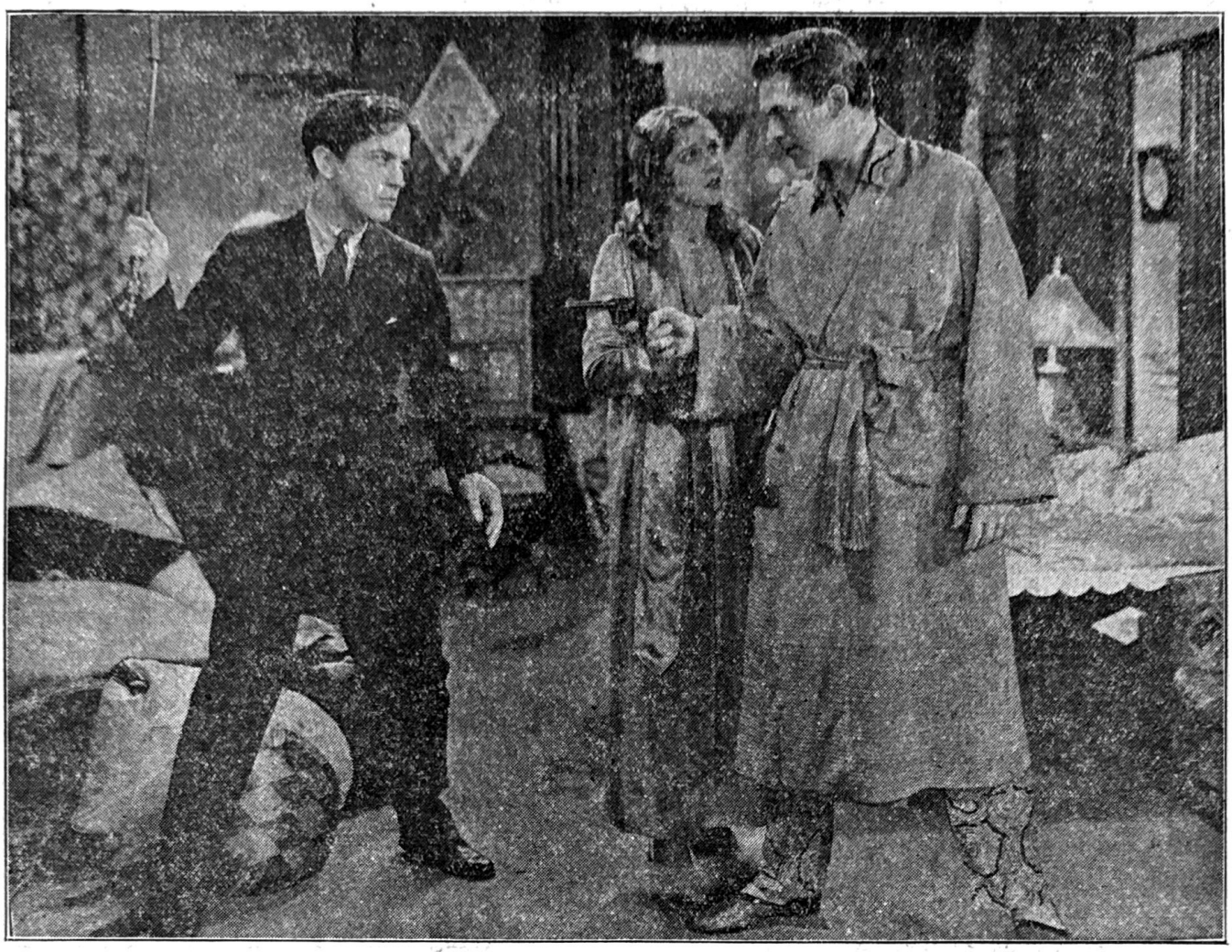
"I know nothing of law and justice," she began, her voice scarcely above a whisper. "All I know is that my boy did not kill Rodney. When Rod collapsed, Doug ran for a doctor. Would a man kill a person he was trying to help?" In spite of her efforts to control herself, the tears were streaming down her face. "I am trying not to cry but I am a wife and tonight my husband is going to die. I love him so much that, if he dies, I will follow him."

With a stricken cry she staggered blindly back to her chair and the white-haired father opened his arms to receive her, his own grief restrained for the moment in his great desire to comfort the sorrowing little wife.

There were no others to speak for the condemned boy, no new evidence to be submitted, so the Governor adjourned the hearing to retire to his private chambers to think things over alone, promising that he would render his decision within the hour.

Mr. Stratton put his arm about the weeping girl as if to lead her from the room, but Paul, who was standing sympathetically at her side, suggested that he let her stay for a while.

"Do you think there is any hope, Paul?" she asked as soon as they were alone together.



"Lay off the gun play! There'll be scandal enough if this ever gets out."

"I know Father will do everything he can," the boy told her.

"But your father owes his election to Mr. Hall," Pat said bitterly. "That's why he is afraid to oppose him."

"You mustn't be so bitter, darling," he told her gently. "Dad will always do the right thing, uninfluenced by any political affiliations."

"He is executing the man I love, and you ask me not to be bitter!" the girl exclaimed.

"He's already given Doug two reprieves," he reminded her, "and all the hearings that were asked for."

"And, in the end, my boy will die," Pat sobbed.

"Brace up," he tried to cheer her. "Dad may yet see things our way. As long as he hasn't given his decision, there is still hope."

With a gesture of contrition, the girl put her hand in his.

"Forgive me, Paul," she said gently. "You've been fine through all this and I've always been able to count on you."

"And you always can, Pat," he told her. "I love you." The girl drew away with a startled gesture. "Don't misunderstand me, dear. I just want you to know that, no matter what happens, I'd give my life for you."

She raised desperate eyes to his.

"If Doug dies tonight," she said slowly, "I'll follow him."

At her words something flashed into the face of Paul Palmer, something that seemed to vibrate through his whole being.

"Doug had you to himself all through life. He shan't die and take you with him," he cried. "I'm more jealous of him tonight than I've ever been in all my life."

Pat looked at him in amazement, but, before she could form the question that was hovering on her lips, they were interrupted by the entrance of Paul's uncle who was warden of the State's Prison and Pat quietly left the room to join Doug's father in the next chamber. When the two men were alone together, the nephew's eyes searched his uncle's face for the answer to the question he could not put into words. But he read little hope there.

"I'm sorry, Paul," the older man said. "Being warden isn't a very pleasant task." then, in an effort to divert the boy's mind, he continued, "Tomorrow let's start on a fishing trip and try to forget everything. We'll get Old Slim as a guide. I can see him now, smoking that old ripe pipe of his, sitting right back in his chair—"

With a startled cry, Paul grasped his arm and in his eyes there was a light akin to madness.

"The chair—that's it!" he sobbed. "The chair!

We've got to save Doug—we can't let him die!"

The warden put his arm about the shaking boy.

"He's got to die," he said gently. "There's no way out. Come, pull yourself together. You've done everything in your power to help him."

"I haven't. I tell you I haven't!" Paul cried hysterically.

"Steady, Paul," his uncle warned. "The strain's been pretty hard on you."

But the boy seemed not to have heard him as he continued wildly:

"Doug didn't kill Rodney Hall!"

"Who did?" the warden asked, more to humor the boy than in the hope of obtaining any information.

Then it came and the older man staggered back as if from the force of a physical blow:

"I did!" Paul sank down into a chair and stared into space as if visioning the whole horrible scene. "I was jealous of Pat. After the party, I walked the streets. Some impulse carried me back to Doug's. I didn't know they were married. I heard Doug and Rod struggling in the hallway. I hid in an alcove. The gun fell; I grabbed it. Crazy with jealousy, I fired at Doug. Rod jumped at him and ran into the bullet. Neither of them had seen me and I fled down the stairs and got away. Although I hated Doug and I thought he had betrayed Pat, I decided to surrender myself. I went to Dad next morning." The boy's eyes softened at the thought of his father. "He was as happy as a kid at being elected. I realized that giving myself up would kill his whole future. I was sure it was only a matter of time before Doug would be acquitted, so I kept silent. I tried hard to save him but it wasn't easy. I still love Pat—and sometimes I even wished Doug would die." He shuddered with horror at the terrible thought, then, putting his hand on his uncle's arm, he begged him to break the news to his father. "I can't face him," he ended with a sob.

The warden stood looking at his nephew for a moment, his white face and tightened lips showing the effect of the blow he had just received, then he slowly shook his head.

"No, Paul," he said finally, "your father must never know."

The boy jumped up from his chair, about to dash from the room in search of the Governor, but the warden held him back.

"Do you think I am going to let an innocent man go to the chair?" Paul cried desperately.

"It would kill your father to know that his son is a—murderer. You're not going to tell him and neither am I. It wouldn't be Doug's blood on your soul but your father's, your own father's blood." Paul sank into the chair again, his eyes fixed on the hands of the clock that seemed to be racing around to the hour set for Doug's execution. "I've always been a pal to you and tried to do what's right," his uncle endeavored to take his mind away from the ticking of the clock that was the only sound that broke the stillness of the room. "Suppose you leave everything to Uncle Brad."

"But Doug mustn't die, Doug mustn't die!" Paul kept repeating.

A moment later Governor Palmer slowly entered the room and, before he spoke, both men knew what his decision was. He turned to his brother.

"Brad, you must do your duty tonight," he said quietly.

Paul jumped up and placed a pleading hand on his father's shoulder.

"Couldn't—couldn't you give him a reprieve, Dad?" he begged.

"I've already granted two reprieves," his father reminded him. "I see no reason for a third."

"But, Dad, I know Doug didn't kill Rod," the boy cried in desperation. "I'm sure of it."

"He was given a fair trial, son," his father said gently, "and convicted by a jury of his peers. I am merely a servant of the people. They believe Doug guilty of murder, therefore he must pay the penalty." The boy sank into the chair again and buried his face in his hands while a storm of sobbing shook his body. His father stood regarding him through tear-misted eyes. He was his only son and his grief was his own. Putting his arms gently about the boy, he begged him not to take it so to heart. "Think how much worse it might have been, if—" He paused, overcome by the horror of the thought. "As Mr. Stratton said, but for the grace of God, it might have been you."

AT THAT very moment, outside a dimly lighted cell, the cruel bars separating her from the dearest thing in life, Pat was taking leave of her husband.

"Oh, my darling, my beloved, they can't take you away from me," she sobbed.

"Dearest one, our love will still live," he tried to comfort her.

"If they take you from me tonight, Doug," she cried, "I will follow you, for I cannot live without you."

In an agony of love and grief she pressed her face against his through the cold bars. As she felt his lips on hers and knew it was for the last time, she grasped his hand in a steel-like clutch. No one should separate them! If they took her boy, they would have to take her with him! The warden who had accompanied her on this last interview put his arms about her and tried to draw her away from the cell, but it took all his strength to release her death-like grip on Doug's hand. When he finally succeeded, she reeled up against him and, lifting her in his arms, he carried her, unconscious, down that corridor of horror.

(Continued on page 30)

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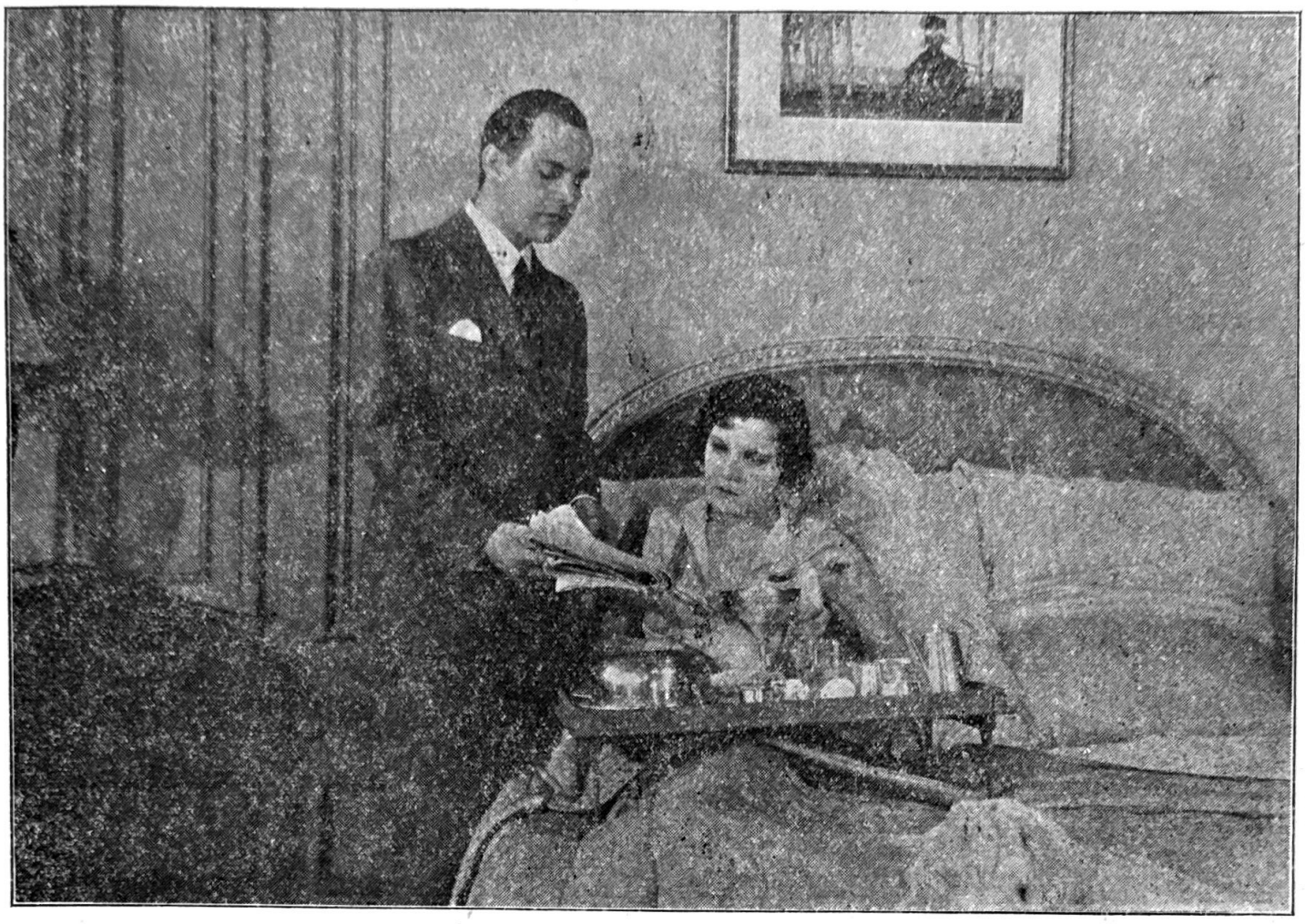

"We're ruined—cleaned out. And it's all your fault."

A MOST IMMORAL LADY

By JEAN PENNINGTON

THE Sargeants were cleaned out, broke. Humphrey Sargeant made the startling announcement to his wife, Laura, one morning as she was enjoying a leisurely breakfast in her room in the city's most exclusive hotel. It was all her fault, too. Her husband took great pains to emphasize that fact. He had not wanted to buy Affiliated Copper, but Laura had insisted. It was a "sure tip" from Bradford Fish, president of the company. It was at a dance one night at the millionaire's own home that he had given the lovely young matron the secret information. The copper would take a steady climb within the next few days and would rapidly retrieve the Sargeant fortune, which Bradford Fish admitted he knew was at a very low ebb. The tip, he said, was given her out of respect for the only good woman he knew—with the exception of his own wife. The millionaire had tried desperately to carry a flirtation begun at Palm Beach to the status of a real "affair", but had been thwarted in his endeavor by the friendly yet decided aloofness of Laura Sargeant. When he had expressed his desire to show his admiration for her for not conceding to his desires, she had had no reason to believe that there was any ulterior motive back of the information he gave her and, at the expense of several heated arguments with her husband, finally persuaded him to risk what was left of their money in Affiliated Copper. Revenge, they both decided, had not been Fish's motive for misleading her, rather the thought that, with her husband penniless, she would turn to him for help.

BUT, though the Sargeants were now without resources, they made no change in their mode of living. They still continued to occupy one of the

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This is an adaptation of First National Pictures' screen presentation of the play by Townsend Martin. John Griffith Wray directed, with Leatrice Joy appearing as Laura Sargeant, Walter Pidgeon as Tony Williams, Sidney Blackmer as Humphrey Sargeant, Montague. Love as John Williams, Josephine Dunn as Joan Porter, Robert Edeson as Bradford Fish, Donald Reed as Pedro the Gigolo, Florence Oakley as Natalie Davis and Wilson Benge as Hoskins, the butler.

most comfortable suites in the hotel, to be seen regularly at all social functions and even to invite their friends in for an evening's entertainment with the accompanying repast and generous supply of choice liquors.

It was at one of these evenings at home that the other guests were surprised at the presence of John Williams, who was a lion in the drawing-room as well as in the financial district and who, consequently, was much sought after by hostesses of the Four Hundred. On this particular evening he was accompanied by his nephew, Tony Williams, a rising young composer. Laura had met the latter on a few previous occasions and had been strangely attracted to him. This attraction had been mutual and this evening, under pretext of getting her to try over his latest number, he succeeded in stealing a few moments alone with her while the rest of the party was gathered in the adjoining room.

"I like your last song, Mr. Williams," Laura complimented when he had finished playing.

"Won't you call me Tony?" he asked.

"Why, we've met only a few times," she demurred.

"But I've been thinking about you a lot," he told her shyly, "and, when you're thinking of a person, you always—always think of her by her first name."

"Thinking about me?" Laura repeated, not at all displeased. "Nothing uncomplimentary, I hope."

The young man's earnest, dark eyes rested for a moment on her lovely face.

"I've been thinking that you're beautiful, charming and tremendously interesting, that underneath your rather hard exterior there is a—"

Laura held up a restraining hand while a look of mock horror clouded her face.

"Oh, don't say that I have a heart of gold," she begged. "Anything but that, Tony."

But he was in earnest, terribly so.

"Tell me, don't you like having men in love with you?" he asked gravely.

"Frankly, I don't," she returned with a light smile. "Of course, I'm flattered—but bored."

At that moment they were interrupted by the entrance of John Williams who laughingly ordered his nephew not to shirk his duty but to hurry into the next room where all the man power of the party was needed for the delicate task of mixing cocktails. Reluctantly Tony left Laura in his uncle's charge, a circumstance for which John Williams had been maneuvering ever since his arrival. He considered himself a connoisseur of women and never had he met one who intrigued his interest so much as his charming young hostess.

"You look very attractive," he said, bending over her.

"And you look very rich," she smiled teasingly.

"Is that the only reason you like me?" he asked.

"Huh, huh, maybe," she parried.

John Williams enjoyed her frankness. It was refreshing, in striking contrast to the assumed indifference to his wealth of all the other women he met. He wished that he did not have to be bored by the necessity of exchanging pleasantries with the other members of the party. They seemed so insipid, so banal in comparison with Laura Sargeant. It was therefore with a thinly concealed gesture of annoyance that he turned at the entrance of Joan Porter who had been watching her chance for a moment alone with the millionaire. She got this moment by advising Laura to repair to her boudoir for a fresh layer of powder and rouge, advice the hostess could not very well ignore when the motive behind it was so obvious. But John Williams had no taste for a tete-a-tete with the pretty blonde flapper and he suggested joining the others in the dining room.

"Wait, please. There is something I want to ask you as Tony's uncle," the girl began, taking her place beside him on the divan. "You know, Tony and I used to see a lot of each other, we were practically engaged."

"He never told me about it," the uncle informed her in surprise.

"How could he?" the girl laughed. "He didn't know it himself."

"What!" John Williams ejaculated, amazed at the methods of the present-day young women.

"Oh, a girl can generally tell when a man is going to propose," Joan told him from the heights of her worldly wisdom. "I felt sure of him until lately."

"Well, perhaps I might talk to him," the man suggested.

"You might, but, for heaven's sakes, don't," Joan warned. "I'll manage somehow."

An outline of her exact method of procedure was interrupted by the entrance of the rest of the party and the conversation became general. A little later Humphrey Sargeant excused himself, saying that he must leave for Boston on a business trip from which he would return on the following night. His departure was a signal for the rest of the guests to prepare to leave. As John Williams shook hands with his hostess, he pressed a note against her palm. When the last guest had left, she hurriedly opened it and a smile curled her lips as she read:

"I will be back later."

She had scarcely changed from her evening dress to a comfortable lounging robe when there was a light tap at the door and she opened it to admit the millionaire whose quick eye was frank to show his approval of her change of costume.

"Do you realize this is the first time I've ever seen you alone?" he asked when they were comfortably seated on the divan.

"But every time you've met me you've told me you adored me," she reminded him, "so we must have been alone somewhere. You'd hardly say that before people. And then your letters—"

"See here, Laura," Williams interrupted, "you know you wanted to see me alone."

"I deny that," she teased. "Anyway, I didn't expect you to swagger in and turn off the lights."

"I thought we could talk more easily, more intimately," he explained his action. "Look here, Laura,

"You know you wanted to see me alone."

I've been frank with you. Why can't you be frank with me?"

He leaned over her, and, at that moment there was a sound at the outer door, the lights were switched on and Humphrey Sargeant confronted the pair sitting on the divan.

"I knew I wasn't wrong," he flashed, taking in the situation at a glance.

"Now please," Laura began, but her husband interrupted harshly:

"I haven't the slightest intention of listening to you trying to talk yourself out of it."

"Is that fair to me?" she asked reproachfully.

"You haven't played so fair with me that I need worry about that," he told her as he walked to the door of her boudoir and with a commanding gesture bade her enter, closing the door behind her tightly.

"And what are you going to do about it," Williams asked when he again faced him.

"I shall sue for divorce at once," the husband announced.

"See here, I can't have you make a mess of your whole life," the old man told him. "You say you are worried about business. Now I can fix that up." He drew out his check book, but Sargeant held up a restraining hand.

"You needn't go on," he told him. "I know what you are trying to do—bribe me."

"No, I'm only trying to make amends for being a blundering fool who almost wrecked two lives," Williams returned gravely. He hastily wrote out a check and held it out to the dejected husband.

"No, I can't do it." Sargeant pushed the check aside. "What would Laura say? Why, she'd never understand.

"From now on, the whole incident is a closed book," John Williams promised. "Good night."

When the door had closed upon the millionaire, Laura came out of her boudoir and faced her husband. He held the check up for her inspection and she gazed at it thoughtfully.

"It's funny," she said. "You start something, almost like a joke, and, before you realize it, it is rather awful, isn't it?"

"Now, Laura, these rich middle-aged men get exactly what's coming to them,"he argued. "How much mercy do they ever show a woman?"

"Yes, I suppose you're right," she admitted finally. "I suppose they never— But this is the last time I'll ever play."

"Now you listen to me," her husband commanded sharply. "Don't start your usual moral revulsions. I'm not in the mood to hear them all over again. Good night." With that he entered his own room and slammed the door.

Laura had just retired when the ringing of the phone brought her once more to the alcove outside her room. Taking down the receiver, she at once recognized Tony's voice.

"I suppose you are anxious about your cigarette

lighter," she anticipated him. "Did you know you left it here?"

"Certainly, I wanted an excuse to talk to you and make you change your mind about lunching with me to-morrow."

"Impossible," she said hurriedly.

"Oh, come on, say, 'Yes'," Tony begged. "If you don't, I shall keep on calling you until you do."

Just then Laura heard her husband's door open and knew he was standing in back of her.

"Yes, then, goodnight," she said hastily and placed the receiver back on the hook.

"Who was that?" Humphrey Sargeant inquired sternly.

"Joan," she lied glibly. "She lost her bag and thought she left it here."

THE luncheon the next day was the first of many meetings between Tony and Laura Sargeant. In spite of the fact that she had told him that it bored her to have men make love to her, the happiest moments of her life were spent basking in the warmth of the young composer's adoration. They took long walks together through the park like two happy children; they rode from one end of the line to the other on a Fifth Avenue bus. Humphrey's absence from the city on a trip of inspection of some oil wells in Texas gave Laura plenty of leisure but, even with her husband so far away, she insisted upon Tony's keeping to the rule that he must never call at the hotel. For the time they were together, she put from her all thoughts of the old life, tried to forget that Humphrey would return and she must go on living with him. He did return, as usual sooner than she expected, with the bad news that the oil company was a downright fake.

"Why, it's the most bare-faced swindle I've ever seen," he told her. "They're a lot of crooks. I think our little game is the safest."

"Humphrey, you know what I told you," she reminded him.

"Yes, yes, I know," he answered impatiently. "You always get these qualms of conscience just as we start."

"No, but I really mean it," she assured him earnestly.

"Now stop talking dribble and listen to reason," he urged. "We're broke, good and broke, this time. Our little racket is a way out. What other solution have you to offer?"

"I don't know," she returned listlessly.

"You're acting very strangely," he commented. "You haven't fallen in love, have you?"

"Don't be ridiculous," she told him.

A ring of the bell followed by the entrance of Joan Porter formed for Laura a welcome interruption to this time-worn argument with her husband.

"I'll run around to the club," he whispered hastily. "I might find a prospect. "There is no time to lose."

JOAN PORTER'S errand was a frank one. She had looked around for a reason for Tony's waning interest in her and had found it—in Laura Sargeant. She had come to ask, in fact to demand, that the young matron give him up.

"You see," she said, "I'm a woman and you can't fool me. I can see what Tony can't, that you're hard, vain, cold, that you don't care a snap of your fingers for him but that it pleases your silly vanity to have him make a fool of himself over you. I'm leaving for Vancouver tonight in Father's private car. When I first made the arrangements, Tony was to go with me but recently he decided not to. But I told him, if he changed his mind, there is plenty of room for him. I telephoned his apartment and left word that you wanted to see him here tonight. You see, I thought I might be able to persuade you to give him up. Anyway, I had to know one way or another." Laura reached for the telephone and started to give Tony's number. "It's too late to stop him," Laura arrested her. "I told him to come here at twelve."

"Perhaps, it's just as well," Laura commented. "The thing must be settled tonight. I'm going to give him up."

"I thought I could convince you."

A smile of joyous triumph lighted Joan's face, followed by a look of bewilderment at Laura's next words:

"My dear, you've had nothing to do with it. What has convinced me are things that you know nothing about, that Tony knows nothing about."

After all, the reason for her decision made no difference to Joan. It was the decision itself that counted. And she knew that, when Laura Sargeant said a thing, she would play square. Therefore she left the apartment humming a merry tune, just a few minutes before Tony Williams entered it.

The young man was in a happy frame of mind. All evening he had been longing for a chat with Laura and, when that telephone message had been delivered to him, he had hurried right over. But he found her in a strange mood. She seemed nervous, ill at ease, and, queerest of all, she begged him to accompany Joan Porter on her trip, reminding him that she herself was a married woman and his attentions to her might compromise them both. But Tony was deaf to all other considerations except his deep love for her. When she pleaded with him to leave before her husband returned, he announced his intention of remaining and telling Humphrey the plain facts about his love for her, his desire to marry her, if he would grant her a divorce.

"Please, Tony, not now," she pleaded in desperation.

His only answer was to take her in his arms and hold her close while he whispered:

"I want to keep you like this always and guard you all the rest of your life."

She was still in his arms when she heard her husband's key in the door. She pleaded with Tony to go but he refused. Then she remembered that the service entrance was locked at night and that there was no way for him to make his escape—even if he would consent. Finally, just to calm her

hysterical pleading, he consented to hide behind the portieres. She would come out of her room later, she told him, and let him out of the apartment. He had just concealed himself when Humphrey, having removed his hat and coat in the outside hall, entered the room, his thoughts still engrossed with the subject that had been uppermost in his mind before he had gone to the club. He again emphasized the fact that there was very little money left in the family exchequer and that he had to have her co-operation to pull through.

"Don't let's talk about it now," she pleaded. "I'm so sleepy and I'm sure you're tired after your long trip. Run on to bed and I'll put out the lights."

"Oh, never mind. I'll do that," he offered, walking to the door of her boudoir and closing it after her.

Then he called for Hoskins, the butler, on the pretense of wanting to borrow his key to the liquor cabinet. When the servant entered the room, Sargeant walked over to the portieres and drew them aside, revealing Tony Williams.

The scene between the two men was a repetition of the one in which the boy's uncle had been the chief actor just a few months before, only this time the betrayed husband learned that his "betrayer" wished to marry his wife and wanted him to grant her a Paris divorce.

"But I don't need to go to Paris," Sargeant told him. "I will sue right here, with Hoskins as my chief witness and, besides that, I shall have a very fine alienation suit against you for a nice large sum—balm for my wounded feelings."

"I can understand your desire for revenge, Sargeant," Tony returned, "but, when you came in, you said something about the exchequer's being low. If you are in pressing need of funds, why can't we settle this little matter out of court? You see, I don't want Laura made the subject of scare headlines."

He offered Sargeant five thousand dollars if he would let his wife get a quiet divorce in Paris. But the husband replied that it was not enough, that he would rather take his chances with a jury. But finally he consented to accept that sum—on account of future payments. And, just as Tony had finished writing out the check, his uncle pushed his way past the butler and entered the room. He had called at the younger man's apartment and, upon learning that Mrs. Sargeant had phoned, requesting him to call at twelve o'clock, had hurried over to prevent, if possible, the badger game that had been played on him. But Tony would not believe anything against the woman he loved and demanded that Laura, in whose door Humphrey had turned the key before he had summoned Hoskins, be permitted to speak for herself.

"Laura, Mr. Williams has forced his way into this apartment and made certain charges against you I feel you must hear, however false they may be," Humphrey told his wife as soon as she entered the room.

"I want to keep you like this always and guard you all the rest of your life."

"You know what we're talking about," John Williams put in. "Isn't it true?"

The girl faced him bravely:

"Yes, absolutely true," she said.

"But, Laura, you haven't heard what he is accusing you of," Tony told her.

With stricken eyes she admitted she had been a party to her husband's scheme to extract money from the millionaire but tried to convince him that her affection for him had been clean, honest. She recalled to his mind the fact that she had refused to let him call on her, had begged him to leave that night before her husband returned, explained that the telephone message asking him to call had been a mistake—though her promise to play square with Joan prevented her from revealing the true circumstance. But, in the face of what had happened, Tony Williams refused to believe her. Disillusioned, his faith shattered, he left the hotel with his uncle, taking with him the brief dream of happiness that Laura had been pressing to her heart.

To her, life under the same roof with her husband—even for the night—was unbearable, so, leaving with him the jewels that had been purchased with ill-gotten money and taking only the bare necessities, she left to see if some place in the world she could win back her self-respect.

MONTHS passed. Joan Porter and Tony Williams, who had been married shortly after that night that had marked the end of Laura Sarg-

(Continued on page 27)

IN THE

By HELEN

Parker was not alone in his apartment when Nosey's voice came over the phone.

NOSEY NORTON, as his name would indicate, had a nose for news. He was the star reporter of the News and he was quite as fully aware of his value to that daily as was Eddy, the editor, who showed his liking for the boy by "bawling him out" on the slightest provocation, though Nosey was always two jumps ahead of the other fellow on every occasion, for he had an uncanny way of sensing a story even before it happened. Take the Kernell-Randall case. Every other reporter in town was conscientiously "going the rounds", but Nosey just happened to be talking to Detective Robinson when word came into his office that the two prominent brokers had just been found dead. Nosey stuck close to the detective and was already phoning into his paper the story that a lovely blonde was implicated in the tragedy when the other reporters arrived upon the scene. Now there wasn't a blonde in sight, no one had mentioned one, but Nosey figured there is a woman in back of every trouble and it is a hundred-to-one shot that she is a blonde. However, when he became aware of the presence of his rivals, he immediately changed his telephone conversation and had both the brokers dying simultaneously of heart failure. As well as the other boys knew Nosey, they "fell" for it and their papers carried the heart failure story in the afternoon editions, while the News came out with a beat on the tragedy. Then, having created a blonde as his central figure, it was up to Nosey to go out and find her.

Scarcely had he started on his quest, which led him first of all to the homes of the two brokers, leaving Robinson trying to get some clue to the tragedy by interviewing Parker, the office manager, when a petite blonde, dressed in the latest approved flapper fashion, entered the brokerage office. The detective at once got busy. Perhaps Nosey's hunch was right, after all, and this might be the blonde in question, falling right into his hands. But the girl insisted that this was her first visit to that particular office. She had been sent there for a job as stenographer. Robinson's trained eye traveled from the modish hat to the dainty pomps—and he doubted her story.

"Why don't you call up the Egbert Stenographic School and find out," the girl suggested pertly.

That was a good idea but the detective knew a better one.

"Sit down at that typewriter and show me how fast you are," he directed.

Smiling over her shoulder and keeping her eyes fixed upon the detective's face, the blonde put a piece of paper in the machine and, with the surety of touch of the experienced typist, her fingers traveled rapidly over the keys. When she had finished, she held her work up for Robinson's approval and to his dismay he read:

"It's amazing how dumb a detective can be."

His hunch had been decidedly wrong. The little blonde may not have looked like a stenographer but she was one without a doubt, as smart as they make them, too smart, in fact, to be hanging around an office in which the arm of the law was endeavoring to solve a mystery. He grunted her dismissal and, with a tantalizing laugh, she left him to his task of questioning the office manager.

MEANWHILE, in the press room of the Court House, Nosey was trying to find some clue that would bear out the story he had caused to be printed in the afternoon edition of his paper. He had really come to believe the blonde yarn himself but to find the particular blonde that figured in this particular case was another matter. His conjectures as to who and where she might be were rudely interrupted by the entrance of a wistful, half-frightened little brunette who timidly inquired for Mr. Norton. When Nosey had established his identity, the girl announced that she had just graduated from a school of journalism and, upon being sent to Mr. Eddy with a letter from the publisher of the News, he had engaged her—as Mr. Norton's assistant. The girl was very pretty, but why did

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This is an adaptation of Warner Brothers' screen presentation of the story by James A. Starr. Joseph Jackson wrote the scenario and John G. Adolphi directed, with Grant Withers appearing as Nosey Norton, Marian Nixon as Anna Lou Anderson, Clyde Cook as Flashlight, Edmund Breese as Eddy, Pauline Garon as Blondie, Frank Campeau as Detective Robinson, Vivian Oakland as Mrs. Kernell, Hallam Cooley as Fancy Somerset, Robert Ober as Parker, Ben Hall as a cub reporter, Spec O'Donnell as Johnny and Jack Wise as Levine.

HEADLINES

HOYT

the paper's star reporter need an assistant and, if he did, why should she have to be the bane of all dyed-in-the-wool newspapermen, a journalism-school graduate? This fact irritated Nosey to such an extent that it drove him to the telephone to verify the fact from Eddy, himself, with the result that he received his orders not only to put the girl through a course of training but to snap it up and get some new facts on the Kernell-Randall tragedy.

Well, if the little brunette, who went by the name of Anna Lou Anderson, wanted to be trained as a reporter, he would train her and maybe she wouldn't be so anxious to enter a field that should be tightly closed to all girls, especially dainty, frail girls that just came up to an honest-to-goodness reporter's heart. How could he bawl her out when the wistful brown eyes were fixed so admiringly on his face and a voice that was all feminine sweetness apologized every few minutes for bothering him. Before the afternoon was over, Nosey had lost all desire to bawl her out and, when evening came, he had quite forgotten that such a thing as the Kernell-Randall case had every newspaper as well as police headquarters on tiptoe to solve the mystery. For the next two days, Eddy searched in vain for his star reporter. The rule was that, when he could not be found on the rounds, he might easily be located in one of his favorite speakeasies—but this proved the exception to the rule. Nosey and Anna Lou were making a round of the picture houses or preparing lunch or dinner in her cozy little apartment while in the city room an irate editor threatened all sorts of dire disaster upon the head of his star reporter—if he could ever locate that head.

IT WAS one noontime when the two young people, oblivious to all demands from the outside world, were preparing their favorite dishes for luncheon that Nosey, never backward in asking the most personal questions in his search for a story, no matter how high politically or socially the questioned might be, was finding great difficulty in asking a very simple girl a very simple question. And this time the party of the second part did neither of the usual things, haughtily told him it was none of the paper's business or talked frankly and openly for the benefit of the press, but shyly nodded her head which the next moment had found a comfortable parking place against Nosey's heart. And it was at this moment than an unsentimental newsboy, passing by the apartment, called out:

"Extry! All about the big murder case!"

Then, for the first time in two days, Nosey remembered that he was a star reporter. He dashed to the window and got a paper. There in the head-

Nosey was beaten on his own story.

lines of the Evening Post he discovered that his rival had scooped him on his own story and his reporter heart fell down to his boots. Anna Lou saw the look of disappointment in his eyes and blamed herself for having let him neglect his work. But Nosey was not beaten yet. Again he called his hunch to work and phoned Parker, the office manager of Kernell-Randall, at his home. He knew the whole story, he told him, and would give him a break if he would confirm a few facts. But, right in the midst of the conversation, a feminine voice came over the wire and asked where he was. Nosey recognized the voice and the story at once took on a new angle. There was a blonde mixed up in the tragedy and she was coming right over to Anna Lou's apartment, in spite of Nosey's plea to her not to do so. He had no desire for Anna Lou to meet her, in fact, to have any knowledge of her existence. But how could he prevent it? Then he found the solution. Hurrying the new little cub into her coat and hat, he directed her to hasten over to Mrs. Kernell's house to get a story that might help him make up for the scoop obtained by his rival paper. And, even as Anna Lou ran down the steps of the apartment, she passed a little blonde going in, but, so engrosesd was she on her first real assignment, she was wholly unaware of the other girl's presence. She would have been amazed if she could have looked into her own apartment a few minutes later and witnessed the scene enacted there. At the first ring of the bell, Nosey had opened the door to admit the little blonde stenographer who had appeared in the brokerage office the morning that the bodies had been discovered. His greeting was anything but cordial.

"I thought you promised to stay out of this town, Helen," were his opening words.

The newcomer smiled with genuine unconcern as she stopped to light a cigarette before answering.

"My name is Alice now," she told him. "I changed it—for professional reasons."

"I had hoped I was through with you forever," he informed her. The little blonde pouted.

"Is that a nice way to talk to your sister?"

"Half-sister," Nosey reminded her.

"We won't argue over fractions," the girl told him. "Now listen here, brother mine, you've always wanted to go to Paris, haven't you?"

"What are you driving at?" Nosey demanded impatiently.

Alice came closer to him and her tone grew confidential.

"I've got ten thousand dollars laid aside for you and all you have to do is quit your job and go to Paris."

"Don't be silly!" the reporter told her. "Just when I've got the dope on Parker!"

The girl fixed her world-wise blue eyes on his face.

"If you send Parker to jail," she said with emphasis, "you send me, too. Do you want to do that?"

A frown darkened the boy's face.

"I don't want to," he returned, "but I will, if necessary."

Then his half-sister tried a new tactic—she would appeal to his sentiment.

"After all, we were kids together, Nosey," she said softly, "and we had the same father."

"I've told you a hundred times you'll end up in the can if you don't quit this racket," he reminded her desperately.

"I am going to quit and never bother you again," she promised. "This is my last job. I'm going to clear out for Europe." Then she noticed the picture of Anna Lou on top of the piano. "Who's the dame?" she asked with interest.

"My fiance, Anna Lou Anderson," he told her, "another reporter on the paper."

This information seemed to give the blonde new hope and she brightened perceptibly.

"All right," she said eagerly. "When she comes back, tell her that you and she are going to have a nice honeymoon in Paris."

"No, I wouldn't take your dirty money," he told her.

"Okay!" she returned nonchalantly. "But think it over, and, if you come to your senses, call the Empire Hotel and leave word for Alice Adare that the answer is, 'Yes,' and the money will be waiting for you."

"You get out of this town tonight," he warned, "or you'll find yourself in the can."

"Oh, get some sense, Nosey," she urged as she started for the door. "Don't be a tramp reporter all your life on a washwoman's salary. Remember, the Empire Hotel."

With that she was gone, leaving the boy in a quandary. Even the news Anna Lou brought in when she returned to the apartment a few minutes later did not succeed in chasing the worried frown from his brow. She had seen Mrs. Kernell and her lawyer was with her. She had pulled a big bluff just as he had done with Parker and told them she knew the facts behind the case and the lawyer had promised that, if she went to his office in the morning, he would give her some important news which he would keep exclusively for her.

"That's great," Nosey told her, trying to show the proper enthusiasm over her story. "I knew I'd make a reporter out of you."

The girl flushed with pleasure.

"What did you find out?" she asked eagerly.

"Oh, I didn't do so well," he told her. "Parker didn't turn up. I'll have to go out and run him down I guess."

Then Anna Lou noticed the extra cocktail glass on the table.

"Didn't he send anybody?" she asked.

"No, he just stood me up cold."

Then her eyes fell on the remains of a cigarette on the ash tray and it had a cork tip.

"Do you mean to say that no one was here?" she asked again.

"Of course not, baby," he told her. "No one was here."

She picked up the cigarette and fixed her eyes on the little tip.

"Did you change your brand of cigarettes, Nosey?" she questioned quietly.

"Oh, I smoke Turkish sometimes." His embarrassment was apparent.

The girl's eyes wandered from the little circle of red on the cork tip to the same telltale marks on the cocktail glass.

"When did you start using rouge, Nosey?" she asked.

The boy knew there was no use of further denial.

"Listen, Anna Lou, I admit I was lying to you," he confessed.

"So that's why you were so anxious to get me out of the house, so you could bring another woman in here!" The tears were very near the surface.

"I know this set-up looks phoney, but it isn't what you think, dear," he pleaded. "The woman who was here was the blonde in the Kernell-Randall case. She came here to try to bribe me to lay off."

"She seems to have done very well," she told him sarcastically.

"There was nothing like that," he assured her. "The girl who was here is my half-sister."

"And you expect me to believe that?" The tears were frankly dimming Anna Lou's eyes now.

"I know it sounds like a lie, but it's the honest truth."

"I'm simple, Nosey, and I'm dumb," she said between sobs, "but I'm not that dumb."

"Please, Anna Lou, trust me," he pleaded. "Believe that I love you."

"Yes, you love me," she repeated, "just as you did all the others. Please go now. I don't want to see you ever again. And tell Eddy I won't be down to the paper any more."

"I wish you would listen, honey," he begged. "I never had anything hit me so hard in all my life."

"Hurry up! Snap that story out, both of you!"

But she would not listen and Nosey took his hat and dejectedly left the apartment.

When the door had closed upon him, Anna Lou bent her head upon her folded arms and gave way to the sobbing she had tried so hard to control. But this was no way for a prospective reporter to meet life's disappointments. Her ambition was to be a sob-sister but the sobbing was to be done in print and not over her own personal heartaches. She raised her head and a look of determination succeeded the dewy wistfulness of her eyes.

THE edition had gone to press the next afternoon when the star reporter of the News ambled purposelessly into the room.

"Where the devil have you been for the last three days?" Eddy greeted. "What's the idea of letting Somerset of the Post scoop you? What's the idea—"

"Hold it," Nosey interrupted. "Don't get tough. I'm not working for you any more. I'm through."

But this was a familiar refrain to the ears of the city editor and he accepted it with unconcern.

"Now don't pull that stuff on me again!"

"But this time I mean it," Nosey replied. "And that Anderson girl told me to tell you that she's quit, too."

As he turned to leave the city desk, Eddy grabbed him by the arm and pulled him back.

"Say, are you batty?" he inquired. "When did she tell you that?"

"Last night," Nosey replied gloomily.

"Say, what kind of a gag is this, anyway?" the editor shouted above the din of the typewriters and the roaring of the presses. "Look at this!"

For the first time that day, Nosey's eyes really opened wide as Eddy held up before him the latest edition, which the office boy had just laid on his desk, and read the first page headlines:

"Kernell-Randall Funds Missing. Widow Demands Accounting. Mrs. Kernell's Attorney Bares Startling New Discoveries to News Reporter."

And the story carried the by-line, "Anna Lou Anderson."

"Does that look as though Anna Lou quit?" the editor demanded.

"My error," Nosey murmured disconsolately.

Eddy's keen eyes searched the star reporter's face.

"What's the mattre with you?" he demanded.

"Nothing," the boy returned. "I'm just fed up with this town. I'm going away for a while."

The man realized that this time the boy meant what he said and the realization caused him to take from his mouth the cigar which he removed only upon great crises.

"Listen, Nosey," he said with gruff kindness, "you've caused me more trouble than any eight re-

porters I ever had, but I like you more than the whole lot put together. You're all shot, kid. What's the matter?"

Nosey tried to lie convincingly but it was difficult with those keen eyes searching his.

"Just got the old wanderlust," he returned. "I'm only a tramp reporter at heart, I guess."

"Now open up, kid," Eddy urged. "Did something happen between you and Anna Lou?"

"To me she's just another sob-sister," the boy returned with assumed nonchalance.

But the city editor knew life; above all, he knew his reporters—and he knew when he could get their confidence. This was decidedly not the time with this particular reporter, so he advised the boy to go out and get a bottle of gin. Perhaps a glass or two would brace them both up. But, the moment Nosey was out of hearing distance, Eddy got Anna Lou on the phone.

"Say, did you and Nosey have some kind of an argument?" he asked excitedly.

"Why—yes—we did, Mr. Eddy," the girl's hesitating voice came back over the wire.

"Well, make it up," her city editor commanded gruffly. "He's all busted up—says he's going to quit—and I don't want to lose him."

Meanwhile, in another booth not very far away, Nosey was calling up the Empire Hotel where he left word for Alice Adare that Mr. Norton said, "Yes."

AND, now that Anna Lou saw her name on the feature story of the first page, nothing could hold her back. The Kernell-Randall case might baffle all the other reporters, even the police department, but she, Anna Lou Anderson, would find the solution. She was on her way to run down a new clue when the News car driven by Johnny, the "legs" and general utility man of the paper, was suddenly run into and forced against a telegraph pole by a limousine which, unknown to the two in the newspaper car, had been following them closely. The impact knocked the girl unconscious and severely injured the boy's hand. The next minute a man jumped from the limousine and, picking Anna Lou up in his arms, carried her to the other car.

"Taking her to the hospital," the few witnesses of the accident decided.

But Johnny's constant association with reporters had sharpened his nose for news and he realized that this was not the purpose of the man in the limousine. If it had been, he figured, why had he been left to his own fate when his hand had been so obviously injured and why had the limousine dashed forward in spite of his efforts to stop it? His disabled hand did not prevent him from making all speed back to the News office where he breathlessly reported to Eddy that Anna Lou had been kidnapped. The news created an uproar in the city room and every reporter was ordered to drop what he was doing and aid in the search for the missing girl.

And, in the midst of the excitement, a telegram was delivered for Nosey.

"It might have a tip in it," Eddy said as he tore open the envelope.

But it proved to be nothing but the girl's own message to the absent reporter, sent the moment she had received the telephone directions from her chief. It read:

"Dear Nosey;

"I do trust you and I'll always love you. Pull yourself together—I did.

"Anna Lou."

If Nosey were only on the job, he could solve the mystery the way he solved almost every other story—Eddy was sure of it. But locating the star reporter at this moment was almost as difficult as locating the kidnapped girl. Just as he was about to set the wires in action to search in the boy's favorite haunts, a call came in for Nosey and the city editor took it on his own phone.

"Hello," he said suavely, in striking contrast to his usual telephonic bark. "This is not Mr. Norton but Mr. Eddy, the city editor, speaking. Mr. Norton is busy right now. Can I do anything for you?" As he talked he scribbled on a piece of paper the order to have the operator trace the number from which the call was being made. "Can I give Mr. Norton any message or can I have him call you back?" There was a pause, then, in a startled voice, he shouted, "What? You'll do what? Who is this? Hold the wire!"

But the party on the other end had hung up, not, however, before the alert little telephone operator had found out the number of the pay station from which the call had been made. And, just as Eddy was about to send his whole staff out to work on this clue, Nosey sauntered into the room, or rather was led in by an accompanying policeman.

"What was the idea of having me arrested and brought back here?" the star reporter demanded.

"It was the only way to get you here," Eddy explained. "And, now that you are here, you may be interested in knowing that Anna Lou has been kidnapped." Nosey started a torrent of questions which were gruffly interrupted by Eddy, "Looks like Parker. A dame just called up asking for you. I suspected something and told her you couldn't come to the phone. She got excited and blurted out that the paper had better lay off the Kernell-Randall case or Anna Lou would go for a ride."

"Was she a blonde?" Nosey asked excitedly.

"How can I tell if a dame's a blonde over the telehpone?" Eddy demanded.

But, when Nosey learned that the call had been traced to a certain pay station, he stopped for no further questions but, grabbing Johnny and Flashlight, the photographer, darted through the door. At the drug store where this particular pay station was located, the clerk distinctly remembered that a blonde had used the phone a short time before. She must live in the neighborhood, for she had made purchases at the store at other times. The information that she had driven up in a black limou-

sine completed the identification and the fact that the clerk remembered that, after making the call, she had bought ginger ale and sleeping powders lent speed to Nosey's feet. He was sure he would have no trouble in locating Anna Lou. The burning question was would he be in time.

Meanwhile, Parker and Alice Adare were making hurried preparations to leave town. The former stopped his hasty packing long enough to open a bottle of ginger ale that was standing on the table and ask his companion:

"How much of this stuff do you give a person to make 'em sleep for a couple of days?"

"In this case, I'd be generous," the blonde returned significantly.

Following her advice, Parker poured a liberal supply of powder into the bottle of ginger ale and set it on a tray containing some sandwiches.

"Now she won't chew through that gag," he remarked with satisfaction as the two hurried upstairs with the tray to a room in which Anna Lou, bound and gagged, was lying helplessly on a couch.

"Listen and get this straight." Parker stood over the girl threateningly. "If you promise not to yell, we'll give you some food. You'll probably be here a week before they find you."

Anna Lou promised and Parker helped her to a chair beside the table. Just as he was about to remove the gag, a startled exclamation from his companion sent him running over to the window.

"That's Nosey Norton, my double-crossing brother," Alice announced, pointing at the News car that had just driven up to the door. "We've got to get rid of him."

They hurried from the room in which they had confined Anna Lou and dashed down the stairs to the street, stopping only long enough to grab their bags and a gun from the drawer of Parker's desk. When they reached the door, Nosey was already hammering on it with all his might. Taken aback by the sudden opening, the reporter was easily covered by Parker who thus got himself and the girl safely into the waiting limousine—not, however, before Flashlight had snapped a picture of the two fugitives.

But, as far as Nosey was concerned, they could escape to their hearts' content and every other paper in town could beat him on the story. His only desire now was to locate the missing Anna Lou. He dashed from one room to another, calling her name frantically. The girl heard his call but, though she had succeeded in working off the gag with the help of the back of the chair against which she was leaning, her throat was so parched from having it in her mouth that she could not raise her voice above a whisper. Then her eye fell upon the open bottle of ginger ale on the table. Bending her head over it, she tipped the bottle forward so that some of the liquid flowed down her parched throat.

"Anna Lou! Anna Lou! It's Nosey," came the boy's frantic call just outside the door.

The girl answered him, then again bent her head over the bottle for another drop of the cooling liquid. And at that moment Nosey burst the door open. With a leap he was at her side, dashed the bottle from her lips and began to pound her violently on the back. This was not quite the reception that Anna Lou was expecting and she looked up at him in hurt surprise.

"What's the matter, Nosey? Didn't you get my telegram?" she asked.

"That stuff's got knock-out drops in it," he hurriedly explained. "How much did you drink?"

"Just a little," she told him.

"Thank God!" he murmured fervently. "Yes, I got your telegram, baby. Hurt any?" he inquired anxiously as he removed the ropes that bound her hands and feet.

"I'm all right," she assured him.

Then shyly he took her in his arms and pressed the shining brown head close to his heart.

"I'm the worst heel you ever knew," he told her earnestly, "but I love you more than anybody else in the world, more than the newspaper."

Anna Lou's eyes were shining as she raised them to his:

"And I know now that you told me the truth," she said.

"Oh, baby, I'm so happy I could kiss you," Nosey exclaimed.

"Why don't you?" the girl murmured. It was a good suggestion and, after he had acted upon it, she continued, "And, Nosey, I got the whole low-down on this Kernell-Randall case. It's the best story this town has ever had and it's absolutely exclusive."

"Great, kid!" Nosey congratulated. "I knew I'd make a reporter out of you. What is the low-down on it, Anna Lou?"

"An entirely new angle. I overhead Parker and the blonde talking about it," she began eagerly, then suddenly stopped short.

"What's the matter, baby?" he asked solicitously.

"Why, we can't print it," Anna Lou reminded him, "I know now that the blonde really is your half-sister."

"Oh, we'll print it, all right," Nosey assured her. "We'll hurry right back to the office and you can give me the dope on the way."

When they reached the street, they found the only conveyance immediately available was the motorcycle of a policeman who had been notified that there were some unusual happenings at the Parker residence and Nosey immediately commandeered this, placing Anna Lou in the seat beside him.

"Whoever told you you're a reporter," was Eddy's greeting to Nosey. "Fancy Somerset has scooped you again! Parker and the dame have been arrested for stealing the firm's funds—and Somerset is right with them."

"Oh, that's nothing to worry about," Nosey told him calmly.

"Nothing to worry about!" the city editor shouted in exasperation. "Beaten on your own story! Well, I'll be—Sit down and fake a yarn on the capture. Get a lot of gun shots in it, whizzing automobiles, blonde bandit—you know the stuff." Then he turned to Anna Lou. "You write a story signed by the blonde dame, how she felt when the bullets went zipping past her. Get started, for heaven's sake!" he shouted at Nosey who was still standing beside his desk.

"Calm down, cuckoo," the star reporter returned in a fatherly tone. "I'll give you a story that'll knock your eye out, the real low-down about Parker, the murderer of Kernell!"

"What?" Eddy exploded.

"That's what I said," Nosey repeated. "While they had Anna Lou bound, she overheard Parker and the dame talking. She was Parker's girl-friend and they had been copping money from Kernell and the firm for months. That morning Randall noticed the shortage in funds and accused Kernell of an affair with a woman. They had a battle and Kernell killed Randall. Parker overheard the whole thing and tried to get hush money from Kernell. When he couldn't succeed, he killed Kernell and tried to make it look like a double murder."

Eddy threw his arms about the boy in rapture.

"Oh, sweetheart, what a story! Give me all you got—quick! You're marvelous, both of you," he concluded his rhapsody, taking Nosey by the arm and fairly dragging him to the typewriter that stood beside Anna Lou's. "Best reporters I've ever had! Going to give you both raises in salary and" —his eyes rested slyly on the blushing young couple —"and three weeks' vacation with pay for a honeymoon. Want you both to be happy. Nosey, I'm going to figure out some special job for you when you come back."

"Thanks, Eddy," the star reporter returned, not interrupting his typing by looking up from the machine.

Special job, eh? He had given him one only a few days before and that job had been to make a reporter out of Anna Lou. He had succeeded beyond Eddy's wildest dreams. Now he had assigned himself to a special job of his own and that job also concerned itself with Anna Lou. But it had nothing to do with beats, scoops, the noise and bustle of the city room, the rumbling of presses, the smell of printers' ink, with anything, in fact, that had the remotest connection with the newspaper game.

Flight

(Continued from page 8)

"No dice, soldier!"

"What, do you mean—she—she—"

Lefty took a deep breath, moved closer to the table where Panama stood and rigidly met the other's questioning eyes.

"She loves me!"

Panama found it difficult to believe his own ears, then all of a sudden realization dawned upon him.

"So that's the kind of a guy you are? I send you to my girl to ask her to marry me and you make love to her yourself? You ran back on your college, you ran back on the flying corps and now you double-cross me!"

"Don't you dare say that!" Lefty shrieked.

"I said it and I'll say it again; you're a dirty, yellow, double-crossing sneak! Now, put up your dukes and fight!"

"I don't want to fight you, Panama!"

"You're yellow, I tell you, you're yellow!"

In a moment, Lefty's fists were clinched and he landed a resounding blow upon Panama's jaw which was met by a cutting pounding in the ribs of the young man, followed by a blow to the head that sent Lefty spinning across the room.

Blind with uncontrollable rage, Panama threw aside the table and crossed the room, grabbing the boy and pulling him to his feet. But the fight had ended. A bugle was heard sounding assembly just as a sergeant ran past the door of the shack calling:

"Turn out, you dead beats, turn out!"

A Marine and a man of arms always, Panama forgot his personal vengeance, grabbed his flying togs and made for the door.

"Come on, get going," he called back. "I'll finish you later."

Reaching the flying field, Panama, Lefty and the others learned that Sandino and his men had been seen by observers marching down a path in the mountains, apparently prepared to take by surprise the wireless center in the little town of Vera Durez.

Two observers were laid up from a recent crash, so the major in command assigned Panama as his personal observer and, because Lefty had had machine gun practice, placed him as observer in the plane of Steve Graham who was now a corporal and on the road to further promotion.

Within five minutes the squadron took off in pursuit of the agile rebel chief.

DAWN came and with it the return of the Marine squadron to the base at Ocotal, disappointed in failing to engage in an encounter with Sandino.

When the planes had all landed and an inspection had been made, the officer in command discovered that the ship piloted by Steve with Lefty as an observer was not in the line-up.

"They broke formation soon after we left," Panama announced, "and flew toward the mountains. They are probably reconnoitering on their own and will fly back later."

But they didn't return. Though a searching party had been sent out from which Panama got himself excused on the plea of illness, twelve hours passed and not a trace of either Steve, Lefty or their plane was found.

After mess Eleanor went to Panama's shack.

"The searching party has been called in," she announced. "Where do you think they are?"

(Continued on page 28)

HELPING HEARTS CLUB

Conducted By ROSEMARY LEE

Pals O'Mine:

If I wanted to be original, I might start off by saying:

"Life is full of coincidences."

But I haven't my original gloves on this morning, so I won't say it but will plunge right into my story.

Here comes a lad from the Signal Service Company, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He doesn't want his letter published as he says one girl to write to is "plenty for him", but I'm going to quote part of it that you may know how many little hands are reaching out from our club and drawing the world together.

"I happened to read the M. P. S. in the Post Library here in Leavenworth and saw a letter signed 'Daniel of the Signal Corps'. After reading the letter, I found that he was one of my old buddies from whom I haven't heard since we went to the Army Tech School together. Fact is, I didn't know his address until I saw that letter. To prove this, why just look and see whether Daniel's last name isn't—"

Yes, it is, JN. I don't have to look it up, for I've personally forwarded so many letters to him that, if you were to wake me up from a sound sleep and say, "Daniel", I could rattle the rest of it off and turn right over and go to sleep again.

Three cheers for the H. H. C.!

* * * ROSEMARY LEE.

Dear Mrs. Lee:

What a pretty name you have, "Rosemary—for remembrance." It's just the right name for you, too, for who else would have thought of organizing the H. H. C. if she had been named anything else but?

Please may I join your club? I am in a sanatorium, fighting the T. B. bugs and getting the better of 'em, too, by golly! I do get lonesome at times, away from home, and I'd just love to have some pen pals.

I am five feet, six inches tall, weigh 104, blonde, have gray eyes that change with my moods, a light complexion, and am twenty years of age. I am very much interested in music, books and sports. I am a Convent and High School graduate. I must add that I am French, so, Anthony of Brooklyn, now is your chance to get acquainted with a real honest-to-goodness French girl.

I would also like to hear from Sonny of Newton, Peppy Toots, one of the Uncle Sam's Leathernecks, and Just Somebody and all who care to write.

Rosemary, I'm just through reading six M. P. S. and how my eyes ache! But how I enjoyed them, I simply couldn't put them aside!

Juliette of New Hampshire.

Of course, you're going to win out, Juliette. A brave, beautiful spirit like yours has conquered even more powerful enemies. I know all the pals, even those who don't write to you, will be sending you helpful thoughts. Won't you write once in a while and let us hear of your progress? The pals you mention will not delay in making the days brighter for you.

(Continued on page 32)

A Most Immoral Lady

(Continued from page 19)

eant's happiness, were dining at one of the most popular cafes in Paris. With them was a young Spaniard for whom the pretty little blonde was openly neglecting the composer, now at the height of his profession. The orchestra started a popular song. A dark-haired girl with wistful eyes came to the center of the floor and started to sing and Tony Williams' face grew white as Joan nudged him and whispered:

"See, I told you I had a surprise for you!"

But Tony's eyes were fixed upon the girl who had been constantly in his thoughts during those long months of trying to reconcile his own ambitions to the pleasure-loving nature of the jazz-mad flapper whom he had married so hastily after the one real love affair of his life had come to such a sad ending.

Laura's song over, she approached the table to greet her friends. She tried to appear natural but the clasp of Tony's hand sent a tremor through her, the sound of his voice made it difficult for her to keep her own from betraying her emotion. Joan's indelicacy in explaining to the other member of the party that Tony had really been in love with the beautiful young singer when he had married her sent a flush of embarassment mounting to her forehead. It was a relief when the wife, having become bored with this particular cafe, announced her intention of moving on to a livelier place.

"Don't try to come along," she told Tony when he rose to accompany her. "It cramps your style to have your husband with you when you're out with a Spaniard," she explained to Laura.

"How long are you going to be in town?" the latter asked in an effort to relieve the tension when the other two had taken their departure.

"I don't know," Tony told her. "The lawyers seem a bit vague about it."

"The lawyers?" Laura questioned.

"We haven't been able to make a go of it," he explained. "Joan wants a divorce, so, naturally, if she feels that way about it, there is nothing more to be said."

But there was much to be said—about themselves, pleas for forgiveness, misty-eyed self-reproaches. And that night Laura Sargeant resurrected a dream and went to sleep with a calm, happy smile on her lips, the dream held close to her heart.

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Flight

(Continued from page 26)

"Something happened to their plane, I guess, and they were forced to land in the valley below. If they did, they are either dead from the fall or, in the event that they made a safe landing, tomorrow will find them ready targets for Sandino's men."

"Aren't you going out after them?" Eleanor asked.

"Me? Why should I risk my neck for a yellow-backed skunk like Phelps?"

"Because he's been the best friend you've ever had!" she told him earnestly. "He avoided me, believing that I loved you, because he was too honorable to rob you of what he believed was yours."

"Eleanor!"

"It's true. Oh, Panama, can't you see, the whole thing is my fault? I let you believe I cared because I didn't want to hurt you. He thinks the world of you, Panama, he idolizes you, he—"

Before she had finished, Panama was out the door. When she went into the open to look after him, he had already taken off and was on his way alone to the valley in search of the man who had taken the only thing in life he had ever loved.

WHEN the air squadron had taken off that morning to meet Sandino, Steve, self-assured, despite Lefty's pleadings, broke formation to fly toward the mountains in hopes of being the first to discover and open fire upon the rebel horde.

Three hours later the two made the startling discovery that they were out of gas. A forced landing was made which completely wrecked the plane and broke Steve's back.

Lefty tended his former foe with the gentleness of a woman, giving him the last drop of water from his canteen, sitting beside him and brushing off the tropical insects that settled in droves on his pain-racked body. The boy knew there was little hope of their being rescued from that disease-laden swamp land and he

shuddered with horror at the slow, lingering death from starvation and thirst that he knew awaited him. As the sun beat down upon the groaning Steve, he begged his buddy to forgive his unkindness toward him and pleaded with him, when life had passed, not to leave his body a prey to the vultures that were even now swarming about him. With his hands clasped in the dying man's, the boy gave his promise. A tremor passed over Steve's huge frame, his eyes closed—and Lefty was alone in the wilderness. His mind turned back to Eleanor, to Panama. Perhaps the girl he adored would find happiness with his pal, now that he was gone. He lit a match and set fire to some dried branches, carrying them to the plane which was soon a mass of flames, a funeral pyre for the Marine stretched out on the wing.

FLYING high above, Panama saw that flame and, swooping down, shouted to the boy. In another moment he had made a hazardous landing and was helping him up into the cockpit of the plane.

But other eyes had sighted the flaming machine, had heard the whirr of the motor as Panama neared the ground. From behind bushes the rebels swarmed toward the two Marines, but Lefty's well-aimed volley of bullets from the machine gun sent them running to the hills, their leader, Sandino, mortally wounded—not, however, before a shot had caught Panama in the shoulder. Lefty's hand gripped the stick and sent the plane soaring in the air until the fleeing rebels became tiny flies clinging to the sides of the hills.

Feeling that he was master of the winged ship, everything he had learned on the flying field came back to Lefty and he was like a hilarious schoolboy with a new toy. As they flew back to the Marine Base, he looped and nosedived, bringing he plane so close to the earth that the watchers threw themselves on the ground to avoid being hit. Then he soared up into the air again in such curves and gyrations that even

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the hard-boiled Panama was fast becoming as dizzy as a novice. Then a cry broke from him:

"There goes a wheel, kid! Let me take her down."

"Wheel, hell!" Lefty shouted above the din of the motor. "You said I could bring her down and I'll do it if we lose a wing."

And he did, to the admiring cheers of the watchers below and the misty-eyed happiness of a sweet-faced nurse who had been watching the maneuvers of the plucky young ace with bated breath.

MONTHS passed. Sergeant Phelps was scornfully regarding a line of new recruits.

"So you want to be fliers, eh?" he growled at them. "You want to be birdies and go bye-bye in the clouds? Well, it will be a miracle if you ever leave the ground." From the corner of his eye he caught the smiling face of Panama Williams, grinning at him from behind a plane. "Do you see that? That's a—" The smiles in the eyes of the recruits caused him to turn in the direction in which he had been pointing, to find Eleanor sitting in the brand new roadster. "That's—my wife."

There was no hope of discipline for the rest of that day and, dismissing the students, he joined Panama and Eleanor at the door of the car.

"Pretty nice bus, eh, buddy?" he queried proudly.

"Right, kid!" the older man agreed.

"Run over to dinner tonight," Lefty invited as he climbed into the seat and put his hand on the wheel.

Then, with the laugh of a delighted schoolboy, he stepped on the gas and sent the car plunging —backward. Panama's laugh joined the boys' as Lefty reversed and sped forward and the happy couple waved to him through a cloud of dust.

Fast Life

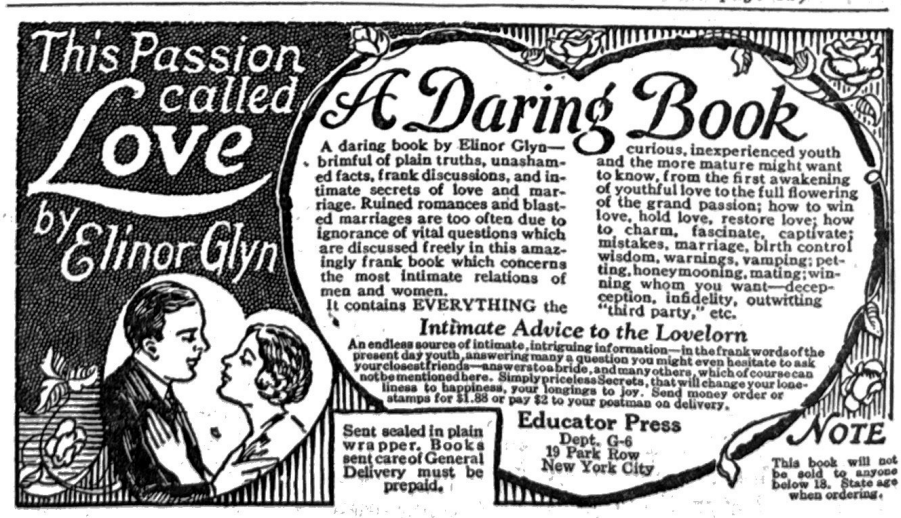
(Continued from page 14)

THE parting with Pat left Doug weak, took from him all the courage which he had been trying to muster up for that last walk. When the prison chaplain entered his cell for the last prayer, the boy could scarcely keep himself from falling as he knelt there beside him and, during that march to the execution chamber, he could not force his feet to obey his will but had to allow himself to be supported by the prison attendants. Yet, when the warden gave him the opportunity to say his last words before he was strapped in the chair, they came clearly:

"I am innocent."

AT THAT same moment, two other young people were going through the death agony with probably a more poignant horror, for they must re-live it again, day after day. Alone in her room, Pat sat with dry, unseeing eyes fixed on the face of the clock. Her whole body felt numb. She seemed to have lost power to move, to feel. All hope had gone from her face as it had from her heart. In

(Continued on page 32)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Fast Life

(Continued from page 30)

the executive mansion Paul Palmer tossed on his bed in an agony of stabbing remorse. The clock ticked away. Every minute brought it nearer the time when the warden, his own uncle, would lift his hand and signal the executioners to throw on the current that would take the life of his best friend. His eyes grew hollow as he watched the moving hands. Just a few more ticks of the clock and it would be beyond his power to make amends for his crime.

Suddenly the shriek of a siren broke the stillness of the early morning and sent Paul rushing to the window. He knew what it meant—a prisoner had escaped. In another moment, the Governor's mansion was in a hub bub, telephones ringing, people running back and forth, and Paul reached the room adjoining his father's study just as his uncle entered through another door. He paused as he heard the Governor's stern voice demanding:

"Do I understand you have failed to execute young Stratton in accordance with my last order?"

"Yes, Dick, I have failed," came his uncle's answer.

"But, in heaven's name, why?" the father questioned. "Don't you know it spells ruin to both of us, an end to our careers?"

The warden bowed his head.

"I'm sorry, Dick, but I couldn't go through with it."

"You are making it difficult, Brad," the Governor told him. "I'll have to bring charges against you, brother or no brother."

"You've got to do something harder." The warden put his hand on the other's shoulder. "You've got to pardon Douglas Stratton—because he did not kill Rodney Hall." The Governor's eyes opened wide in questioning surprise. "What I'm going to tell you is harder for you, harder for me, than executing young Stratton." The speaker paused, searching for some way to temper the blow, then, finding none, he plunged on desperately, "Rodney Hall was killed by your own son. Paul confessed everything to me barely an hour ago." The father seemed at first not to grasp the meaning of his brother's words, then understanding dawned and he clutched the edge of his desk. "He wanted to tell you," the warden concluded, "but I wouldn't let him."

Governor Palmer threw back his shoulder as if to ward off a blow, then he gave the order:

"Find Paul and lock him up!"

As the warden left the room, he passed the guards bringing in the captured Douglas. As they led him up to the Governor's desk, the Executive said quietly:

"Release your prisoner." Then, turning to the group of newspapermen who had filed into the room, he added, "Tell your papers that Stratton is innocent. I'll have a complete statement for you by noon."

As the reporters hurried out to get in touch with their various offices, Pat rushed into the room and threw herself into the arms of her boy, weeping hysterically.

"I knew it was an accident," she sobbed, turning to the Governor.

"I would to God it had been an accident," he replied, gazing at her with stricken eyes.

The next moment a shot caused the three to start. Turning toward the adjoining room from which the report had come, they saw a hand clutch the portiere, then drag it down as the lifeless body of the Governor's son crumpled to the floor.

Helping Hearts Club

(Continued from page 27)

Dear Rosemary Lee:

I get very lonesome at times. I have been reading your column and would like to join your wonderful club. I am a Jewish girl, nineteen years old, and would like to hear from Jewish boys and girls around my age.

I would appreciate it very much if you can keep me from feeling blue.

Lonesome Sally of Buffalo.

I'll do my best, Sally, and so will all the pals.

I'm just as disappointed as you are, pals. I'm hoping and planning for better luck next issue. Cheer up! I have. Rosemary Lee.

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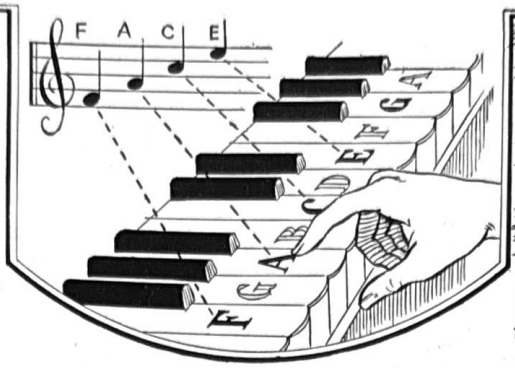

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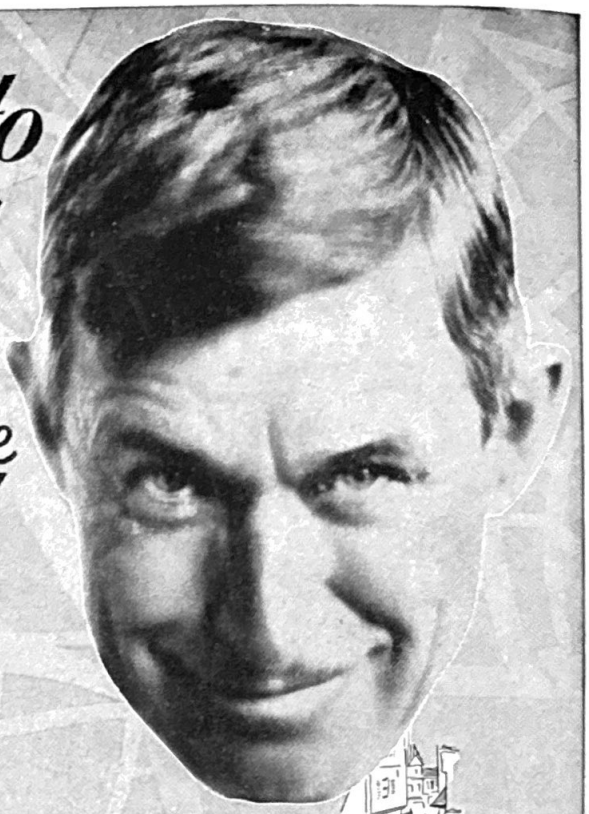
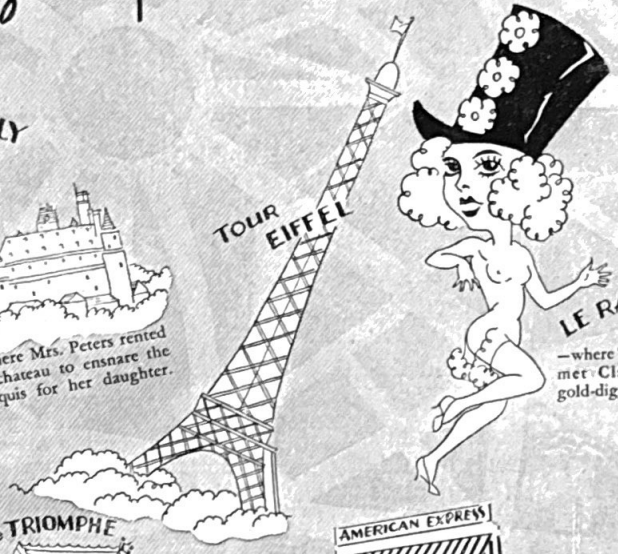


NEUILLY

—where Mrs. Peters rented the chateau to ensnare the Marquis for her daughter.

TOUR EIFFEL



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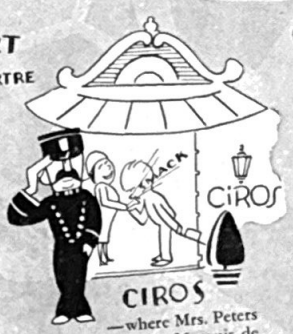
MONTMARTRE

—where "Pike" Peters met Claudine, the gold-digging grisette.



CIROS

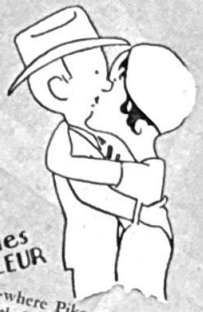
—where Mrs. Peters met the Marquis de Brissac Coudray and a possible title for her unmarried daughter.

BOULEVARD de CLICHY

—Claudine's apartment where Mrs. Peters went to find Pike.

ARC de TRIOMPHE

—where Pike met his son Ross and discovered his affaire de coeur with Fleurie.



HOTEL des TROIS COULEUR

—where Pike staged a scene with Claudine to horrify Ross, whom he expected any moment.

WILL ROGERS

as "Pike" Peters, saw everything that Paris had to show—and that's an eyeful. At the Folies-Bergére he shouted "Pike's peek or bust." He paixed and paixed at the Cafe de la Paix. Ooo-la-la-la!

At Notre Dame, he spent all day looking for the hunchback and thought a chapeau was a place to live. He was gold-digged from Montmartre to the Latin Quarter, which he thought was two bits in Roman money.

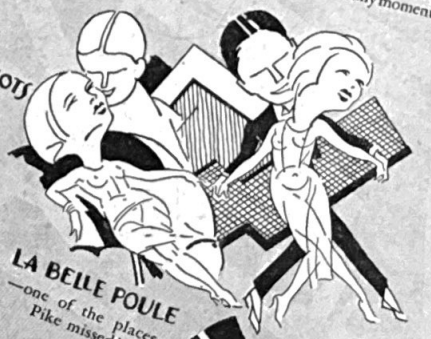
America's favorite comedian and most natural talking picture actor is a riot in this hilarious comedy of a newly rich American family who tried to crash Parisian society.

Go to Paris via this all-talking Fox Movietone of Homer Croy's novel, dramatized by Owen Davis.

directed by FRANK BORZAGE

CAFE des DEUX MAGOTS
LATIN QUARTER

—where Pike's son, Ross, met and fell in love with Fleurie, the midinette.



LA BELLE POULE

—one of the places Pike missed!

BOULEVARD ST. GERMAIN

—where Ross and Fleurie set up housekeeping—an old French custom.

BOULEVARD des ITALIENS

—where the family, reunited, bought their tickets back to America—sadder and wiser.

FOX THE LAST WORD